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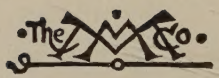

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TORONTO

AN INTRODUCTION TO POETRY

BY

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To
W. P. TRENT
AND
A. H. THORNDIKE

PREFACE

An Introduction to Poetry is intended for the college freshman or sophomore as well as for the general reader. Its chief aims are two: first, to offer in a natural and interesting manner the technical apparatus, the criticism, and the examples needed for a good elementary knowledge of English poetry; second, to offer a convenient opportunity for a comparison of the new and the older English and American poets.

The twelve chapters approach poetry from various angles—type, meter, subject, and period. Each chapter includes enough poems to illustrate well the points brought out in the text. The explanations of poetic technique are, we believe, sufficiently full, and are so introduced as to be neither difficult nor tedious. General criticism is provided at appropriate places, and many points of possible difficulty or exceptional interest are explained not in foot-notes, but in the text. We have arranged poems in such groups that the reader is able to criticize for himself; and we have, as far as possible, made the transition from poem to poem easy and continuous. We have begun with the song because it is a primitive and universally understood type of poem. If we have given too generous space to the Old French forms, light verse, or free verse, we have done so on the grounds either of special difficulty or of unusual interest at the present time.

We have, in the second place, invited an almost constant comparison between the older and the contemporary poets. In this poetic age, the touchstone of the old is the best criterion for judging the new. Moreover—since new writers arise while the span of life continues essentially the same—it is necessary that each generation should discard some of the verse approved by its predecessors as "classic." Our omission of popular older poems is, nevertheless, due also in large part to the constraining limitations of an anthology of the inductive type. Still, if the proportion of contemporary verse seems too great, one should remember that contemporaneity is second only to absolute value in determining the appeal of a work of art. A poem can to no future generation mean as much as to the sympathetic contemporaries of its author.

It should be reiterated here that the several hundred poems included in this work are not offered as the several hundred greatest poems in the English language. Considerations of space, of points to be illustrated, of difficulties of structure have compelled us to omit some poems that we should have liked to use. We believe, however, that a reader of catholic taste will find little to object to in the selections. We have met with such willing cooperation from the poets and publishers who own the copyrights of the included contemporary selections that the list of poems originally chosen has had to be modified in less than a dozen cases. The necessary omissions have nevertheless been, we regret to say, some of the greatest of recent poems. To mention but one instance, Mr. John Masefield, although generously granting our other re-

quests, declined to authorize the use of his "August, 1914."

The plan of *An Introduction to Poetry* was conceived by Mr. Beaty. At first it was intended that each author should write six chapters, but circumstances prevented Mr. Beaty from writing more than four—Chapters III, IV, VII, and VIII. The other eight are by Mr. Hubbell. The entire book has, however, been revised by both authors, and each assumes full responsibility for all selections, critical comments, and errors.

We owe a general obligation to many of the works listed in the Bibliography and to the lectures of our former teachers—especially those of Columbia University. To our colleagues, Professors John H. McGinnis and Marie D. Hemke, of the English Department of Southern Methodist University, we are indebted for valuable criticism. Miss Hemke has read the entire manuscript, much of it more than once, and has assisted us in many other ways. To Mrs. Beaty and Mrs. Hubbell we are deeply indebted for criticism and helpful suggestions, and, in the case of Mrs. Beaty, for very material assistance in preparing the manuscript for the press.

J. B. H.
J. O. B.

Southern Methodist University,
Dallas, Texas,
July 27, 1922.

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The generous coöperation of poets and publishers has made possible the inclusion of many poems which are still in copyright. We wish to express our grateful obligation to those poets who have added their permission to that of their publishers: Miss Amy Lowell, Mrs. Josephine Preston Peabody Marks, and Messrs. John Gould Fletcher, Robert Frost, Wilfrid Wilson Gibson, Richard Le Gallienne, Haniel Long, Christopher Morley, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Carl Sandburg, Siegfried Sassoon, and John Hall Wheelock. To the following publishers and other persons we are indebted for the use of poems still in copyright:

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and a portion of the "Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration"; for John Greenleaf Whittier's "Skipper Ireson's Ride," "Telling the Bees," and a selection from "Snow-Bound"; for Thomas Bailey Aldrich's "Palabras Cariñosas"; for Laurence Binyon's "For the Fallen"; for "H. D.'s" "Oread"; for Bret Harte's "Her Letter" and "Mrs. Judge Jenkins"; for Josephine Preston Peabody's " 'Vanity, Saith the Preacher' "; for Clinton Scollard's "In the Sultan's Garden"; for John Godfrey Saxe's "Woman's Will"; and for Odell Shepard's "Certain American Poets."

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CONTENTS

		PAGE
	PREFACE	vii
	ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	xi
CHAPTER		
I.	THE STUDY OF POETRY	1
II.	THE SONG	21
III.	THE DUPLE METERS	65
IV.	THE TRIPLE METERS	137
V.	IAMBIC PENTAMETER	172
VI.	THE BALLAD	235
VII.	THE SONNET	268
VIII.	THE OLD FRENCH FORMS	294
IX.	LIGHT VERSE	317
X.	FREE VERSE	363
XI.	POEMS STUDIED BY THEME	388
XII.	THE CONTEMPORARY POETS	443
	APPENDIX	
	I. NOTES	483
	II. BIBLIOGRAPHY	495
	GENERAL INDEX	499
	INDEX TO FIRST LINES	517

LIST OF POEMS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	THE STUDY OF POETRY	1
	Watson, William: *Lachrimæ Musarum* (in part)	1
	Dickinson, Emily: *A Book*	4
	Whittier, John Greenleaf: *Burns* (in part)	5
	Bryant, William Cullen: *The Poet*	9
	Fletcher, John Gould: *Blake*	15
II.	THE SONG	21
	Foster, Stephen Collins: *Old Folks at Home*	23
	Swing Low, Sweet Chariot	28
	Burns, Robert: *Afton Water*	31
	Burns, Robert: *Auld Lang Syne*	33
	Douglas, William, and Lady John Scott: *Annie Laurie*	34
	Shakespeare, William: *Hark, Hark, the Lark*	36
	Jonson, Ben: *Song to Celia*	37
	Moore, Thomas: *Believe Me if All Those Endearing Young Charms*	38
	Gilman, Samuel: *Fair Harvard*	39
	Newman, John Henry: *Lead, Kindly Light*	41
	Key, Francis Scott: *The Star-Spangled Banner*	42
	Smith, Samuel Francis: *America*	44
	Carey, Henry: *God Save the King*	45
	John Brown's Body	46
	Howe, Julia Ward: *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*	48
	Randall, James Ryder: *My Maryland*	50
	Stevenson, Robert Louis: *Requiem*	53
	Kipling, Rudyard: *The Gipsy Trail*	53
	Burns, Robert: *John Anderson*	55
	Emerson, Ralph Waldo: *Concord Hymn*	56
	Shelley, Percy Bysshe: *To Night*	61
	Tennyson, Alfred: *Crossing the Bar*	62
	Tennyson, Alfred: *Sweet and Low*	63
	Yeats, William Butler: *Song* from *The Land of Heart's Desire*	64
III.	THE DUPLE METERS	65
	Byron, Lord: *She Walks in Beauty*	70
	Jonson, Ben: *Hymn to Diana* (in part)	71
	Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth: *Hiawatha* (in part)	71
	Blake, William: *The Tiger* (in part)	72

PAGE

Scott, Sir Walter: *Hunting Song* 72
Housman, Alfred Edward: *Reveille* (in part) . . 73
Blake, William: *Songs of Innocence: Introduction* . 74
Herrick, Robert: *Upon His Departure Hence* . . . 76
Swinburne, Algernon Charles: *The Garden of Proserpine* 78
Wordsworth, William: *The Solitary Reaper* . . . 84
Wordsworth, William: *I Wandered Lonely* 86
Emerson, Ralph Waldo: *The Rhodora* (in part) . . 87
Waller, Edmund: *Go, Lovely Rose* 87
Bryant, William Cullen: *To a Water-fowl* 88
Bryant, William Cullen: *Thanatopsis* (in part) . . 90
Holmes, Oliver Wendell: *The Chambered Nautilus* (in part) 90
Henley, William Ernest: *Invictus* 91
Arnold, Matthew: *Destiny* 92
Kipling, Rudyard: *The White Man's Burden* . . . 92
Doyle, Sir Francis Hastings Charles: *The Private of the Buffs* 94
Wordsworth, William: *Ode to Duty* 96
Lovelace, Richard: *To Lucasta, on Going to the Wars* 98
Burns, Robert: *A Bard's Epitaph* 99
Kingsley, Charles: *Young and Old* 100
Goldsmith, Oliver: *When Lovely Woman Stoops to Folly* 101
Noyes, Alfred: *Niobe* 102
Keats, John: *Ode on a Grecian Urn* 105
Tennyson, Alfred: *The Splendor Falls* 107
Tennyson, Alfred: *Ring Out, Wild Bells* 108
Tennyson, Alfred: *To the Queen* 110
van Dyke, Henry: *Tennyson* 112
Beaumont, Francis: *On the Tombs in Westminster Abbey* 113
Tennyson, Alfred: *To Virgil* 113
Pierpont, John: *The Ballot* 115
Miller, Cincinnatus Heine ("Joaquin"): *Westward Ho* 116
Hovey, Richard: *Unmanifest Destiny* 117
Kipling, Rudyard: *For All We Have and Are* . . 118
Burns, Robert: *Bruce's Address to his Army at Bannockburn* 120
Henley, William Ernest: *Romance* 121
Timrod, Henry: *At Magnolia Cemetery* 122
Rossetti, Christina Georgina: *Song* 123
Teasdale, Sara: *I Shall Not Care* 124
Teasdale, Sara: *Wisdom* 124
Whittier, John Greenleaf: *Snow-Bound* (in part) . . 125
Scott, Sir Walter: *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (in part) 125

CHAPTER PAGE

Long, Haniel: *Dead Men Tell No Tales* 126
Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth: *Hymn to the Night* . 127
Poe, Edgar Allan: *To One in Paradise* 128
Coleridge, Samuel Taylor: *Kubla Khan* 130
Shelley, Percy Bysshe: *To a Skylark* 132

IV. The Triple Meters 137
Byron, Lord: *The Destruction of Sennacherib* . . . 138
Byron, Lord: *O Talk Not to Me* 139
Cowper, William: *The Poplar Field* 140
Swinburne, Algernon Charles: *A Forsaken Garden* . 142
Wolfe, Charles: *The Burial of Sir John Moore at Corunna* 145
Browning, Robert: *Prospice* 146
Scott, Sir Walter: *Coronach* 148
Browning, Robert: *The Year's at the Spring* . . . 149
Shelley, Percy Bysshe: *The Cloud* 149
Hood, Thomas: *The Bridge of Sighs* 153
Browning, Robert: *The Lost Leader* 157
Noyes, Alfred: *Unity* 159
Noyes, Alfred: *Seven Wise Men* 160
Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth: *Evangeline* (in part) 162
Lanier, Sidney: *The Song of the Chattahoochee* . . 164
Byron, Lord: *The Bride of Abydos* (in part) . . . 165
Coleridge, Samuel Taylor: *The Knight's Tomb* . . 166
O'Shaughnessy, Arthur William Edgar: *Ode* . . . 167
Tennyson, Alfred: *Break, Break, Break* 168
Yeats, William Butler: *The Lake Isle of Innisfree* . 169
Masefield, John: *The West Wind* 170

V. Iambic Pentameter 172
Emerson, Ralph Waldo: *This Shining Moment* . . 172
Marlowe, Christopher: *Doctor Faustus* (in part) . . 173
Shakespeare, William: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (in part) 174
Shakespeare, William: *Hamlet* (in part) 175
Shakespeare, William: *Othello* (in part) 175
Fletcher, John(?): *Henry VIII* (in part) 176
Milton, John: *Comus* (in part) 177
Milton, John: *Paradise Lost* (in part) 179
Wordsworth, William: *The Prelude* (in part) . . . 179
Keats, John: *Hyperion* (in part) 181
Landor, Walter Savage: *To Robert Browning* . . . 182
Tennyson, Alfred: *Ulysses* 183
Bryant, William Cullen: *The Prairies* (in part) . . 186
Emerson, Ralph Waldo: *The Snow-Storm* 187
Robinson, Edwin Arlington: *Ben Jonson Entertains a Man from Stratford* (in part) 188

CHAPTER PAGE

Frost, Robert: *Mending Wall* 189
Dobson, Austin: *Ars Victrix* (in part) 192
Homer: *The Iliad* (in part) 193
Crapsey, Adelaide: *On Seeing Weather-beaten Trees* . 194
Chaucer, Geoffrey: *Prologue* (in part) 195
Dryden, John: *Lines Printed under the Engraved Portrait of Milton* 197
Pope, Alexander: *Essay on Criticism* (in part) . . 197
Keats, John: *Sleep and Poetry* (in part) 198
Browning, Robert: *My Last Duchess* 199
Frost, Robert: *The Tuft of Flowers* 201
Gray, Thomas: *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* 205
Robinson, Edwin Arlington: *Mr. Flood's Party* . . 211
Fitzgerald, Edward: *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám* (in part) 213
Byron, Lord: *The Vision of Judgment* (in part) . . 214
Morris, William: *An Apology* 215
Masefield, John: *The Widow in the Bye Street* (in part) 217
Spenser, Edmund: *The Faërie Queene* (in part) . . 218
Thomson, James: *The Castle of Indolence* (in part) . 219
Keats, John: *The Eve of St. Agnes* (in part) . . . 220
Byron, Lord: *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (in part) . 221
Shelley, Percy Bysshe: *Ode to the West Wind* . . . 223
Wordsworth, William: *Ode: Intimations of Immortality* 228

VI. The Ballad 235

Lord Randal 239
The Twa Corbies 240
Sir Patrick Spens 241
Fair Helen 243
Jesse James 244
Katharine Jaffray 246
Scott, Sir Walter: *Lochinvar* 248
Kipling, Rudyard: *Danny Deever* 252
Masefield, John: *The Yarn of the "Loch Achray"* . . 254
Keats, John: *La Belle Dame sans Merci* 257
Whittier, John Greenleaf: *Skipper Ireson's Ride* . . 259
Noyes, Alfred: *The Highwayman* 262

VII. The Sonnet 268

Rossetti, Dante Gabriel: *A Sonnet is a Moment's Monument* 268
Milton, John: *When I Consider* 270
Keats, John: *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer* 271

CHAPTER PAGE

Shakespeare, William: *Shall I Compare Thee to a Summer's Day* 272
Shakespeare, William: *No Longer Mourn for Me When I Am Dead* 273
Shakespeare, William: *To Me, Fair Friend, You Never Can Be Old* 274
Spenser, Edmund: *What Guile is This, that those her Golden Tresses* 275
Sidney, Sir Philip: *Come, Sleep! O Sleep, the Certain Knot of Peace* 276
Drayton, Michael: *Since There's No Help, Come Let us Kiss and Part* 277
Milton, John: *On the Late Massacre in Piedmont* . 278
Wordsworth, William: *London, 1802* 278
Wordsworth, William: *The World is Too Much with Us* 279
Byron, Lord: *Sonnet on Chillon* 280
Shelley, Percy Bysshe: *Ozymandias* 281
Keats, John: *On the Grasshopper and Cricket* . . . 282
Browning, Elizabeth Barrett: *How Do I Love Thee?* 283
Bridges, Robert: *Who Builds a Ship* 284
Brooke, Rupert: *The Soldier* 284
Arnold, Matthew: *Shakespeare* 285
Watson, Sir William: *Written in Mr. Sidney Lee's Life of Shakespeare* 286
Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth: *Oft Have I Seen at Some Cathedral Door* 287
Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth: *O Star of Morning and of Liberty* 287
Masefield, John: *Now They Are Gone with All Their Songs and Sins* 288
Masefield, John: *I Never See the Red Rose Crown the Year* 289
Masefield, John: *On Growing Old* 290
Robinson, Edwin Arlington: *Firelight* 290
Robinson, Edwin Arlington: *Souvenir* 291
Wordsworth, William: *Scorn Not the Sonnet* . . . 292
Watts-Dunton, Theodore: *The Sonnet's Voice* . . . 293

VIII. The Old French Forms 294

Lang, Andrew: *Ballade to Theocritus, in Winter* . . 295
Lang, Andrew: *Ballade of the Southern Cross* . . 296
Dobson, Austin: *A Ballad of Heroes* 297
Dobson, Austin: *The Prodigals* 299
Rossetti, Dante Gabriel: *The Ballad of Dead Ladies* . 300
Chaucer, Geoffrey: *To Rosemounde, a Balade* . . 303
McCrae, John: *In Flanders Fields* 304
Napier, Eliot: *All Men Are Free* 304

CHAPTER PAGE

Dobson, Austin: *In After Days* 305
Dobson, Austin: *The Wanderer* 306
Dobson, Austin: *Vitas Hinnuleo* 307
Swinburne, Algernon Charles: *A Baby's Feet* . . . 308
Dobson, Austin: *A Kiss* 309
Bunner, Henry Cuyler: *A Pitcher of Mignonette* . . 309
Dobson, Austin: *When I Saw You Last, Rose* . . 310
Henley, William Ernest: *Villanelle* 311
Scollard, Clinton: *In the Sultan's Garden* 312
Gosse, Edmund: *Sestina to F. H.* 314

IX. Light Verse 317
Harte, Francis Bret: *Her Letter* 318
Aldrich, Thomas Bailey: *Palabras Cariñosas* . . . 323
Moore, Thomas: *The Time I've Lost in Wooing* (in part) 324
Herrick, Robert: *To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time* 325
Field, Eugene: *The Truth about Horace* 326
Untermeyer, Louis: *Questioning Lydia* 327
Holmes, Oliver Wendell: *The Last Leaf* 328
Locker-Lampson, Frederick: *My Mistress's Boots* . 330
Peabody, Josephine Preston: *"Vanity, Saith the Preacher"* 332
Prior, Matthew: *To a Child of Quality Five Years Old* 334
Bunner, Henry Cuyler: *"One, Two, Three"* 335
Byron, Lord: *To Thomas Moore* 337
Pinkney, Edward Coate: *A Health* 338
Burgess, Gelett: *The Purple Cow* 340
Lear, Edward: *The Pobble Who Has No Toes* . . . 340
Hood, Thomas: *Faithless Nelly Gray* 342
The Young Lady of Niger 345
Cary, Phœbe: *When Lovely Woman Wants a Favor* . 345
Harte, Francis Bret: *Mrs. Judge Jenkins* 346
Loines, Russell Hilliard: *On a Magazine Sonnet* . . 348
Browne, William: *On the Countess Dowager of Pembroke* 349
Pope, Alexander: *Epitaph Intended for Sir Isaac Newton* 349
Tennyson, Alfred: *Sir John Franklin: On the Cenotaph in Westminster Abbey* 349
Robinson, Edwin Arlington: *An Inscription by the Sea* 350
Gay, John: *Life is a Jest* 350
Rochester, Earl of: *Epitaph on Charles II* 350
Burns, Robert: *Epitaph on John Dove* 351
Macaulay, Lord: *A Jacobite's Epitaph* 351
Tinker, Chauncey B.: *Brussels Cross Inscription* . . 352

CHAPTER PAGE

Prior, Matthew: *To His Soul* 352
Dickinson, Emily: *This Quiet Dust* 353
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang: *Wanderer's Night-songs* . 353
Landor, Walter Savage: *On His Seventy-fifth Birthday* 354
Landor, Walter Savage: *On Death* 354
Landor, Walter Savage: *With Petrarch's Sonnets* . 354
Prior, Matthew: *Written in a Lady's Milton* . . . 355
Hardy, Thomas: *Her Initials* 355
Pope, Alexander: *I Am His Highness' Dog at Kew* . 355
Watson, Sir William: *His Friends He Loved* . . . 355
Brereton, Mrs. Jane: *On Beau Nash's Picture* . . . 356
Chesterfield, Earl of: *Immortal Newton* 356
Saxe, John Godfrey: *Woman's Will* 356
Wattles, Willard: *Creeds* 356
Hunt, Leigh: *Rondeau* 357
Morley, Christopher: *To a Post-Office Inkwell* . . . 357
Byron, Lord: *Lines Written in an Album at Malta* . 357
Lowell, James Russell: *For an Autograph* 358
Lowell, James Russell: *To Those Who Died* . . . 358
Gilder, Richard Watson: *Navies nor Armies* . . . 359
Watson, Sir William: *To Christina Rossetti* 359
Whitman, Walt: *To Old Age* 359
Pound, Ezra: *In a Station of the Metro* 360
Crapsey, Adelaide: *Triad* 360
Crapsey, Adelaide: *The Warning* 360
Dobson, Austin: *Jocosa Lyra* 361

X. Free Verse 363

Collins, William: *Ode to Evening* 365
Nineteenth Psalm (in part) 368
Teasdale, Sara: *The Lamp* 368
Arnold, Matthew: *Philomela* 369
Masters, Edgar Lee: *Alexander Throckmorton* . . 373
Dunsany, Lord: *The Worm and the Angel* 373
Swinburne, Algernon Charles: *To Walt Whitman in America* (in part) 375
Whitman, Walt: *To a Certain Civilian* 376
Whitman, Walt: *When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer* 377
Whitman, Walt: *As Toilsome I Wander'd Virginia's Woods* 378
Whitman, Walt: *Darest Thou Now, O Soul* 379
Henley, William Ernest: *Margaritæ Sorori* . . . 380
Bynner, Witter: *The New World* (in part) 381
Masters, Edgar Lee: *Come, Republic* 382
Sandburg, Carl: *A Fence* 384
Fletcher, John Gould: *Exit* 385

CHAPTER		PAGE
XI.	POEMS STUDIED BY THEME	388
	Poe, Edgar Allan: *The Sleeper*	389
	Burns, Robert: *Highland Mary*	392
	Wordsworth, William: *She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways*	393
	Landor, Walter Savage: *Rose Aylmer*	394
	Byron, Lord: *Oh! Snatch'd Away in Beauty's Bloom*	395
	Arnold, Matthew: *Requiescat*	395
	Whittier, John Greenleaf: *Telling the Bees*	396
	Millay, Edna St. Vincent: *Elegy*	398
	Malone, Walter: *Abraham Lincoln*	401
	Whitman, Walt: *O Captain! my Captain!*	402
	Bryant, William Cullen: *The Death of Lincoln*	403
	Lowell, James Russell: *Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration* (in part)	404
	Robinson, Edwin Arlington: *The Master*	406
	Lindsay, Vachel: *Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight*	409
	Watson, Sir William: *For Metaphors of Man*	410
	Morris, William: *A Garden by the Sea* (in part)	412
	Tennyson, Alfred: *Flower in the Crannied Wall*	412
	Wordsworth, William: *Tintern Abbey* (in part)	413
	Wordsworth, William: *Elegiac Stanzas*	414
	Poe, Edgar Allan: *Sonnet—To Science* (in part)	416
	Tennyson, Alfred: *In Memoriam* (in part)	417
	Arnold, Matthew: *Dover Beach*	418
	Hardy, Thomas: *In a Wood*	420
	Kilmer, Joyce: *Trees*	422
	Wheelock, John Hall: *Earth*	423
	Byron, Lord: *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (in part)	426
	Harte, Francis Bret: *San Francisco* (in part)	427
	Wordsworth, William: *Composed upon Westminster Bridge*	428
	Browning, Robert: *Up at a Villa—Down in the City*	429
	Fletcher, John Gould: *Broadway's Canyon*	432
	Sandburg, Carl: *Chicago*	433
	Whitman, Walt: *To a Locomotive in Winter*	436
	Lindsay, Vachel: *On the Building of Springfield*	437
	Lowell, Amy: *Texas*	440
	Dunsany, Lord: *The Prayer of the Flowers*	442
XII.	THE CONTEMPORARY POETS	443
	Kipling, Rudyard: *The King*	449
	Yeats, William Butler: *When You Are Old and Gray*	451
	Masefield, John: *A Consecration*	455
	Gibson, Wilfrid Wilson: *Prelude*	456
	Shepard, Odell: *Certain American Poets*	458
	Le Gallienne, Richard: *The Eternal Way*	459
	"H. D." (Mrs. Richard Aldington): *Oread*	461

PAGE
Robinson, Edwin Arlington: *The Dark Hills* . . . 462
Robinson, Edwin Arlington: *Monadnock Through the Trees* 463
Lindsay, Vachel: *The Eagle That Is Forgotten* . . 464
Masters, Edgar Lee: *George Gray* 466
Masters, Edgar Lee: *John Hancock Otis* 467
Tagore, Rabindranath: *A Prayer for India* 469
Mordaunt, Major Thomas O.: *Sound, Sound the Clarion* 471
Kipling, Rudyard: *Recessional* 472
Seeger, Alan: *I Have a Rendezvous with Death* . . 474
Ledwidge, Francis: *Soliloquy* (in part) 475
Binyon, Laurence: *For the Fallen* 476
Sassoon, Siegfried: *Song-books of the War* 478
Noyes, Alfred: *Kilmeny* 479
Sandburg, Carl: *A. E. F.* 480

INTRODUCTION TO POETRY

CHAPTER I

THE STUDY OF POETRY

The seasons change, the winds they shift and veer;
The grass of yesteryear
Is dead; the birds depart, the groves decay:
Empires dissolve and peoples disappear:
Song passes not away.
Captains and conquerors leave a little dust,
And kings a dubious legend of their reign;
The swords of Cæsars, they are less than rust:
The poet doth remain.

William Watson: "Lachrimæ Musarum"

"The future of poetry is immense, because in poetry, where it is worthy of its high destinies, our race, as time goes on, will find an ever surer and surer stay." We can think of no better way of beginning a poetic anthology than by quoting this opening sentence of Matthew Arnold's Introduction to Ward's *English Poets*. These words are as true today as they were half a century ago when they were written. For "Poetry," as Wordsworth said, "is as immortal as the heart of man." If poetry is not immortal, it is at any rate more nearly so than anything else made by man. No one, in fine, can afford to remain indifferent to this great and imperishable possession of the race.

We are, however, living in a rapidly changing age which has little patience with anything belonging to the past. Old ideas, old conventions, old standards seem to be passing away. Although, strangely enough, no one suggests that poetry is something we have outgrown, there are nevertheless many who assert that we have outgrown much of the poetry which preceding generations thought great. This is natural and inevitable, and no one need regret it. We do not look for exactly the same things in poetry that our Victorian grandparents sought, for our view of life is different from theirs. Each age must give its own answer to the recurring question, Why read poetry? Although the answer which we give today is not essentially different from that given long ago by Aristotle or by Sir Philip Sidney, it is indispensable that we answer the question for ourselves, even though we may merely translate into modern terms what older apologists have said.

Throughout this chapter and, to a less degree, throughout the entire book, we shall quote extensively from what the poets themselves have had to say about their aims and methods. The best interpreter is the poet himself, particularly if he be, like Arnold, Coleridge, Poe, or Amy Lowell, a gifted critic as well.

Many are the motives which induce men to read books. In the preface to his novel, *Pierre et Jean*, Guy de Maupassant wrote: "The public is composed of numerous groups who say to us [writers]: 'Console me,—amuse me,—make me sad,—make me sentimental,—make me dream,—make me laugh,—make me tremble,—make me weep,—make me think.' But there are some chosen spirits

who demand of the artist: 'Make for me something *fine*, in the form which suits you best, following your own temperament.'" In other words, the reasons why men turn to fiction and poetry are almost endless in their variety, but the reader whom every novelist and every poet most desires is he who first ascertains what the writer is trying to do and then judges his success or failure by that aim.

Lord Dunsany, the Irish dramatist, has said: "Of pure poetry there are two kinds, that which mirrors the beauty of the world in which our bodies are, and that which builds the more mysterious kingdoms where geography ends and fairyland begins, with gods and heroes at war, and the sirens singing still, and Alph going down to the darkness from Xanadu." Borrowing the terminology of prose fiction, we shall call these two kinds of poetry realistic and romantic.

There are times when we turn to poetry as a means of escape from prosaic surroundings. In this mood poetry offers a pleasing means of beguiling an otherwise tedious hour. Poetry, said Keats,

> should be a friend
> To soothe the cares, and lift the thoughts of man.

In this mood we turn from what Wordsworth called the "familiar matter of to-day" to

> old, unhappy far-off things
> And battles long ago.

We lose ourselves in Camelot with Arthur, Lancelot, and Guinevere, or roam the Scottish Highlands with James Fitz-James and Ellen Douglas, or we turn to the age of chivalry which Keats magically resurrected in "The Eve

of St. Agnes." Or again, we turn to external nature, as did Keats in his "Ode to a Nightingale." "On the viewless wings of Poesy" we may, with him,

> Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
> What thou among the leaves hast never known,
> The weariness, the fever, and the fret
> Here, where men sit and hear each other groan.

Emily Dickinson, a New England poet whose work is too little known, has admirably expressed the mood in which we prefer the poetry of romance.

A BOOK *

> There is no frigate like a book,
> To take us lands away,
> Nor any coursers like a page
> Of prancing poetry.
> This traverse may the poorest take
> Without oppress of toll;
> How frugal is the chariot
> That bears a human soul!
>
> *Emily Dickinson* (*1830-1886*)

But there is a mood in which we turn to poetry of a different kind. Amy Lowell has said,

> All books are either dreams, or swords,
> You can cut, or you can drug, with words.

We do not always wish to escape life; we often wish to learn more about it. The poet can show us the poetry latent in even the most prosaic surroundings. An old

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lady who was looking at a picture of the river Thames by Whistler said to the painter, "Mr. Whistler, I have lived in London fifty years, and I never saw the river look like that." The painter's reply was "Ah, but don't you wish you could!" As another painter, Browning's Fra Lippo Lippi, puts it,

> We're made so that we love
> First when we see them painted, things we have passed
> Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see;
> And so they're better, painted—better to us,
> Which is the same thing. Art was given for that.

It is in this mood that we prefer the realistic Browning to the romantic Keats. The poet can teach us what Burns taught Whittier, as the latter tells us in "Burns":

> New light on home-seen Nature beamed,
> New glory over Woman;
> And daily life and duty seemed
> No longer poor and common.
>
> I woke to find the simple truth
> Of fact and feeling better
> Than all the dreams that held my youth
> A still repining debtor. . . .
>
> Why dream of lands of gold and pearl,
> Of loving knight and lady,
> When farmer boy and barefoot girl
> Were wandering there already?

The poetry of words should help us to see the poetry of life. For poetry is not merely something found in

books; it is a way of looking at life. There is an embryo poet in every one of us. Emerson wrote in "The Enchanter,"

> The little Shakespeare in the maiden's heart
> Makes Romeo of a plough-boy on his cart.

The greatest thing a poet can do for us is to let us look at the world with his eyes.

The poetry which holds us longest is that which has some intimate relation to our own lives. We do not care to linger in the weird world of Poe's "Ulalume," for the characters seem hardly human. The poet, however, need not always write of the near-at-hand and the contemporary. He may "show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image" without being an ultra-realist. The characters of the most improbable romances, like *Ivanhoe* and *Marmion*, may be as real to us as the town drunkard in the *Spoon River Anthology*. Judged by any standard of probability, the plot of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is utterly absurd; but Bottom and Puck are as real as ourselves. As Aristotle pointed out, it often happens that there is more truth in poetry than in history.

To the question, What is poetry? no one will ever give a satisfactory answer. Poetry, as we have already suggested, does not mean the same thing to any two poets or lovers of poetry. It does not even mean the same thing to the same person in two successive decades. Most of us become ashamed of our youthful favorites, and many poets have omitted from later editions those verses of which they once were proudest. Poetry, again, resembles sorrow, love, and faith; only experience can teach us the

full meaning of the words. As Wordsworth said of the poet,

> you must love him, ere to you
> He will seem worthy of your love.

Every definition of poetry should not only state its positive qualities but should also exclude certain things which are often confused with poetry but do not belong to it. For generations the best foreign and native critics have told us that we Anglo-Saxons are most likely to overestimate the intrinsic poetic worth of didactic poetry. While it is probably true that the greatest poetry, as Arnold said of all literature, gives us "a criticism of life," it does not follow that a poem should ever directly teach a moral. Poe never tired of condemning the didacticism of the New England poets, and contemporary American poets and critics agree that he was right. The older New England poets inherited too much of the Puritan attitude toward life to be able always to distinguish between the ethical and the beautiful. Occasionally, as in Kipling's "If" and Wordsworth's "Character of the Happy Warrior," didactic verse is so excellent of its kind that only a very rash critic will deny that it is genuinely poetic. Longfellow's "Psalm of Life" is the classic example of the didactic poem which is popular with the average reader but has no standing with critics and scholars. As a sermon, it is magnificent; as poetry, it is poor. It is unfortunate that Longfellow's sonnets on Dante are so little known, for they are much better poetry and are not marred by such moral tags as that which closes "The Village Blacksmith,"

Thanks, thanks, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught.

The poet should follow the advice of Lowell, who wrote in "The Origin of Didactic Poetry,"

Put all your beauty in your rhymes,
Your morals in your living.

"The poet's only moral duty, as a poet," says Spingarn, "is to be true to his art, and to express his vision of reality as well as he can."

Another common error is to imagine that there is something supernatural about the act of writing poetry. The composition of poetry is not an abnormal process at all. A little experience in writing verse will help any one to see that the poet is a workman in words who excels the rest of us mainly in his larger conceptions and his greater skill in embodying these in poetic language. The poet is not a freak but a man of keen sensibilities whose emotional reactions naturally take the form of verse. In China, according to Witter Bynner, it is only the abnormal person who does not write verse. "A vein of Poetry," said Carlyle, "exists in the hearts of all men; no man is made altogether of Poetry. We are all poets when we *read* a poem well." Certain modern critics, Spingarn and Croce, go so far as to assert that the creative and the critical instincts are one and the same. This may well be doubted although Poe's well-known account of the composition of "The Raven" suggests the same position. Psychology will perhaps eventually throw more light upon the obscure process of poetic composition. Bryant's

advice to would-be poets in the following poem is worth reading in this connection.

THE POET

Thou who wouldst wear the name
  Of poet 'mid thy brethren of mankind,
And clothe in words of flame
  Thoughts that shall live within the general mind!
Deem not the framing of a deathless lay
The pastime of a drowsy summer day.

But gather all thy powers,
  And wreak them on the verse that thou dost weave,
And in thy lonely hours,
  At silent morning or at wakeful eve,
While the warm current tingles through thy veins
Set forth the burning words in fluent strains.

No smooth array of phrase,
  Artfully sought and ordered though it be,
Which the cold rhymer lays
  Upon his page with languid industry,
Can wake the listless pulse to livelier speed,
Or fill with sudden tears the eyes that read.

The secret wouldst thou know
  To touch the heart or fire the blood at will?
Let thine own eyes o'erflow;
  Let thy lips quiver with the passionate thrill;
Seize the great thought, ere yet its power be past,
And bind, in words, the fleet emotion fast.

Then, should thy verse appear
  Halting and harsh, and all unaptly wrought,
Touch the crude line with fear,
  Save in the moment of impassioned thought;

Then summon back the original glow, and mend
The strain with rapture that with fire was penned.

Yet let no empty gust
  Of passion find an utterance in thy lay,
A blast that whirls the dust
  Along the howling street and dies away;
But feelings of calm power and mighty sweep,
Like currents journeying through the windless deep.

Seek'st thou, in living lays,
  To limn the beauty of the earth and sky?
Before thine inner gaze
  Let all that beauty in clear vision lie;
Look on it with exceeding love, and write
The words inspired by wonder and delight.

Of tempests wouldst thou sing,
  Or tell of battles—make thyself a part
Of the great tumult; cling
  To the tossed wreck with terror in thy heart;
Scale, with the assaulting host, the rampart's height,
And strike and struggle in the thickest fight.

So shalt thou frame a lay
  That haply may endure from age to age,
And they who read shall say:
  "What witchery hangs upon this poet's page!
What art is his the written spells to find
That sway from mood to mood the willing mind!"

William Cullen Bryant (*1794-1878*)

It is impossible to frame a definition of poetry which will include all poetry and exclude prose. The true antithesis of poetry, as Coleridge pointed out, is not prose but science. Poetry is emotional; science is the

opposite. Science deals with facts, poetry with suggestions. The scientist calls water H_2O; the poet calls it murmuring, rippling, still, or blue. It is impossible to make any exact or comprehensive distinction between the language or the subject matter of poetry and prose. Nevertheless we all feel that poetry and prose are not the same thing. Instead of attempting a definition of poetry, we shall quote a number of representative definitions, which taken together give as accurate a conception of poetry as it is possible to convey in definitions.

Ruskin defines poetry as "the presentment, in musical form, to the imagination, of noble grounds for the noble emotions." Wordsworth also emphasizes the emotional side of poetry when he defines it as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings recollected in tranquillity." In another definition, which emphasizes the content of poetry, Wordsworth calls it "the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge." Shelley's definition is suggestive: "Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the best and happiest minds." Poe's definition is "the rhythmical creation of Beauty" in words. The language of poetry, said Milton, should be "simple, sensuous, and passionate." In a notable article on *Poetry* in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Theodore Watts-Dunton gives one of the most comprehensive of all definitions: "Absolute poetry is the concrete and artistic expression of the human mind in emotional and rhythmical language." An even better definition perhaps is that of the American poet, Edwin Arlington Robinson: "Poetry is a language that tells us, through a more or less emotional reaction, something that cannot be said. All poetry, great or

small, does this. And it seems to me that poetry has two characteristics. One is that it is, after all, undefinable. The other is that it is eventually unmistakable."

There are a number of things which distinguish genuine poetry from mere versifying, but the one quality which needs most to be emphasized is sincerity. No poem can be great unless its author is sincere in telling us what he sees and feels and thinks. Above all, the poet must not try to make us feel what he himself does not completely feel. The untrained reader often fails to see that the language of an inferior poem is conventional and consequently insincere. Such poems, with their outworn phrases, to quote Pope,

> ring round the same unvaried chimes,
> With sure return of still expected rhymes;
> Where'er you find "the cooling western breeze,"
> In the next line, it "whispers through the trees":
> If crystal streams "with pleasing murmurs creep,"
> The reader's threatened (not in vain) with "sleep."

Hamlet's "take arms against a sea of troubles" is a classic instance of the poet's failure to visualize what he is saying. Longfellow's mariner, in "A Psalm of Life" "sailing o'er life's solemn main" and at the same time examining "footprints on the sands of time," is another example of confused phrasing. Walt Whitman used to go through his poems ruthlessly cutting out all these trite phrases, which today are usually called *clichés*. Learning to detect the trite, the insincere, depends upon practice. Taste in poetry, as in everything else, grows by feeding upon the right things.

But, one may ask, what are the right things and how do you know that they are the right things? This is a question difficult to answer. It is not enough to appeal to the great names of the past; for, contrary to the popular notion, the great poets do not enjoy an unchanging fame. We cannot accept even Homer as a great poet merely because Matthew Arnold assures us that he is one; Homer must prove himself a great poet to *us*.

With more recent poets, like Tennyson and Longfellow, the problem is still more difficult. The poets of the mid-nineteenth century are being severely tested today. There are many who deny that either Tennyson or Longfellow was a poet at all. Our fathers thought Longfellow's "Village Blacksmith" and Tennyson's "May Queen" great poems, but to us the former seems too didactic and the latter too sentimental to be great.

In the last analysis, no one can tell exactly what makes a poem a classic; and it is best for us frankly to admit that fact. Perhaps the best answer has been given by Arnold Bennett:

"A classic is a work which gives pleasure to the minority which is intensely and permanently interested in literature. It lives on because the minority, eager to renew the sensation of pleasure, is eternally curious and is therefore engaged in an eternal process of rediscovery. A classic does not survive for any ethical reason. It does not survive because it conforms to certain canons, or because neglect would kill it. It survives because it is a source of pleasure, and because the passionate few can no more neglect it than a bee can neglect a flower. The passionate few do not read 'the right things' because they

are right. That is to put the cart before the horse. 'The right things' are the right things solely because the passionate few *like* reading them."

Except in compiling a collection of contemporary poetry, most anthologists make it a rule never to admit a poem by a living author. This is undoubtedly playing safe, for, as every one knows, contemporary estimates are exceedingly liable to be wrong. Critics disagree even concerning poets who have long been dead. Matthew Arnold thought Gray a better poet than either Chaucer or Burns. Wordsworth and Tennyson both considered Burns a great poet; but Wordsworth thought Burns's songs unworthy of him, whereas Tennyson greatly preferred them to his other poems. Still another poet, Aubrey de Vere, did not care at all for Burns. Literary history is full of once hallowed names which are now forgotten. What verdict posterity will ultimately pass upon living poets, no man knows.

We do not, however, wish the reader of this volume to rest under the misconception that poetry is something written only by the dead. Consequently, in full knowledge of our liability to error, we have included in this collection a large number of poems by living authors. It is probably true that many of the poems we have included will not survive; but there is, nevertheless, much to be gained from setting side by side the older and the contemporary poets. It is the surest test of each. If the living poets cannot withstand the test of being placed beside Burns, Shelley, Wordsworth, and Browning, then—so much the worse for them. If an older poet offers nothing that interests the present generation, we shall have to drop him.

We include the poems of living poets especially because they should mean more to our generation than they can ever mean to any other. It is a matter of fundamental importance that we should, if possible, know and read our poets before they are dead. They write for us rather than for posterity. Why should some poet, a hundred years hence, find occasion to write of a poet now living as John Gould Fletcher has recently written of William Blake, whose work was hardly recognized until fifty years after his death?

BLAKE

Blake saw
Angels in a London street;
God the Father on a hill,
Christ before a tavern door.
Blake saw
All these shapes, and more.

Blake knew
Other men saw not as he;
So he tried to give his sight
To that beggarman, the world.
"You are mad,"
Was all the blind world said.

Blake died
Singing songs of praise to God.
"They are not mine," he told his wife,
"I may praise them, they are not mine."
Then he died. And the world called Blake divine.

John Gould Fletcher (1886-)

"It appears," says Max Eastman, "that a poet in history is divine, but a poet in the next room is a joke."

One should beware of assuming either of two pernicious attitudes: first, that only contemporary poetry is of any importance and, second, that only the older poetry is worthy of serious attention. In his admirable *Study of Poetry* Professor Bliss Perry has said: "I have little confidence in the taste of professed admirers of poetry who can find no pleasure in contemporary verse, and still less confidence in the taste of our contemporaries whose delight in the 'new era' has made them deaf to the great poetic voices of the past. I am sorry for the traditionalist who cannot enjoy Robert Frost and Edwin Arlington Robinson and Edgar Lee Masters and Carl Sandburg. He is, in my opinion, in a parlous state. But the state of the young rebel who cannot enjoy 'Lycidas' and 'The Progress of Poesy' and the 'Ode to Dejection' is worse than parlous. It is hopeless."

Present-day poetry is not essentially different from that of a century ago. We are in the midst of a rather violent reaction against nineteenth century poetic ideals; but such a revolt, as Professor J. L. Lowes has ably demonstrated in his *Convention and Revolt in Poetry,* is no new thing in poetic history. Euripides, Marlowe, Dryden, Wordsworth, and Victor Hugo were rebels also. The past, in fact, holds the key to the understanding of present-day verse; for, as Miss Harriet Monroe has said, "The new in art is always the elder old." We need, furthermore, to turn to older writers to understand what it is that the new poets are rebelling against. Moreover, a knowledge of older poetry helps us to find a proper perspective for judging the poems of our own day.

There is only one way of acquiring a thorough under-

standing of the technical aspects of poetry; and that is by writing verse. In a sense it is doubtless true that poets are born and not made, but they certainly come into the world as ignorant of versification and language as the rest of us. The poet learns the use of his tools by practice, just as the carpenter, the blacksmith, and the mason learn the use of theirs. It is not always remembered that practically all the important critics of poetry have attempted to write poetry themselves; and our greatest English and American critics, Coleridge, Arnold, Lowell, and Poe, were genuine poets who had mastered their craft before they undertook to expound its laws. Practice in the writing of verse, moreover, increases one's ability to write good prose, as even the prosaic Benjamin Franklin found. It enlarges the vocabulary and sharpens the feeling for the subtle distinctions in words.

And yet one hesitates to emphasize the value of verse writing because so many of those who can write fluent verse make the monumental mistake of thinking that they are great poets. In every state in the Union there are hundreds of these deluded persons who, alas, are not as mute as the inglorious Miltons in Gray's "Elegy." The love of poetry and the ability to write fluent verse do not make one a poet. Great poets are the rarest of nature's productions; it seems as if she threw aside thousands of imperfect specimens, poetasters, while creating one great poet.

Although most great poems were written before the invention of the riming dictionary, many young versifiers fancy it an indispensable part of every poet's baggage. Only the beginner needs the riming dictionary, for the

poet soon acquires from practice great facility in recalling all the rime words available to his purpose. As a handy substitute for the large riming dictionary, we suggest the following vest pocket edition. Let us suppose that we wish a rime for the word *glee*. Glance down the following list of consonants, adding the vowel sound *ee* to each of them in turn. Make a list of the words which you find.

b-, bl-, br-, c-, ch-, cl-, cr-, d-, dr-, f-, fl-, fr-, g-, gl-, gr-, h-, j-, k-, l-, m-, n-, p-, pl-, pr-, qu-, r-, s-, sc-, sh-, sl-, sm-, sn-, sp-, squ-, st-, str-, sw-, t-, th-, tr-, tw-, v-, w-, wh-, wr-, y-, z-.

After striking out the combinations which do not make words, we have *be, bee, fee, flea, flee, glee, agree, degree, he, key, lea, lee, me, knee, pea, plea, quay, sea, see, ski, she, tea, tee, thee, tree, wee,* and *ye*. A little practice in looking for rimes will show that certain words, like *love*, have very few mates. Feminine, or double, rimes are particularly difficult to find in English. By employing participial endings like *-ed* and *-ing*, one can manage to find enough feminine rimes for a very short poem. The little dictionary given above reveals the following rimes for *seeing: being, feeing, freeing, skiing,* and *treeing*. For *burning* we find *earning, churning, learning, concerning, turning,* and *yearning*. The student who wishes to learn to write correct verse should study some of the manuals listed in the Bibliography, especially those of Fairchild and Andrews. He will probably find that rime presents fewer difficulties than several other matters.

In conclusion, may we be permitted to make two sug-

gestions to those who wish to learn to understand and enjoy poetry? One reason why many persons find poetry difficult or unpleasant reading is that they regard a poem as merely a collection of words upon the printed page. Poetry is meant not for the eye but for the ear; it is living human speech and not cold print. Above all things, he who would learn to love great poetry should avoid reading it as he reads his newspaper or the latest popular novel, skipping every other word and half the lines. Poetry is music; and, like other forms of music, it gains in meaning when interpreted by the human voice. When so situated that he cannot read aloud, the man who loves poetry will make sure that, as he reads, he *hears* distinctly every syllable. To understand and enjoy poetry, one must read and re-read it as a man reads and re-reads a letter from one he loves.

If after a sympathetic and careful re-reading, you find that such a poem as Wordsworth's "Ode: Intimations of Immortality" does not stir you profoundly, perhaps the reason is that you have not yet had the experience of life necessary to give you an understanding of this great poem. The imagination of youth partially supplies the place of experience; but much of what is greatest in poetry is comparatively meaningless to those who have never known love, sorrow, married life, children. It is unfortunate that most of us read the masterpieces of English poetry only in our immature years in school and college, for the great poets write mainly for the mature and the experienced. It is said that George Edward Woodberry, poet, scholar, and critic, was once delivering at Columbia University an enthusiastic lecture on the

Italian poet Ariosto when he was interrupted by one of his students, the now well-known novelist Upton Sinclair, who said: "Professor Woodberry, I don't care anything about Ariosto. What shall I do about it?" Mr. Woodberry paused a moment and said, "Young man, grow!" The great poets should be our life companions. The more we read them, the better we shall understand them. If we do not continue to read them after we leave school, we shall probably have to confess late in life, like Darwin, that we have lost the power to enjoy them.

CHAPTER II

THE SONG

And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse.
Milton: "L'Allegro"

The song is a poem which is sung. It belongs equally to poetry and music, two arts which deal with sounds. In music the term often includes not only the lyric but also the ballad, which in poetry is classed separately and will be discussed in a later chapter. The song is the simplest and yet perhaps the most enduring form of either music or poetry. It is the oldest form of music and, the ballad alone excepted, also of poetry; and yet none of the later and more complex forms of either art has so wide an appeal as the song. The Greeks believed song to be the invention of the gods, and a Hebrew poet tells us that at the creation "the morning stars sang together" for joy. Nothing else in the whole range of art has such power to move the heart as this blending of melody and verse. Only Milton's "fit audience . . . though few" find pleasure in *Paradise Lost*, and Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" is "caviar to the general"; but "Annie Laurie" and "Auld Lang Syne" stir the hearts of millions.

Beautiful melodies and great poems are abundant, but the perfect blend of the two is one of the rarest things in the world of art. There are many stirring airs like "Dixie," which are yet to find appropriate words; and there are many lyrics like "Crossing the Bar" which, though repeatedly set to music, still lack an ideal musical setting. The musician and the poet are generally too ignorant of one another's fields to achieve the ideal union of great poetry and beautiful music. Great songs are as rare as they are beautiful.

Just what each art contributes to this wedding of poetry and music is best discovered by examining them separately. The poem which is not sung—Shelley's "To a Skylark" for instance—often fails to arouse any emotion in the inexperienced reader. The poem does not sing itself to him, as the poet meant that it should. Music without words, on the other hand, is apt to arouse an emotion which is vague and undefined, not linked to any definite idea or image. When we hear even so simple an air as Dvořak's beautiful "Humoresque," most of us long for words to tell us what the composer is trying to express. But when we listen to "My Old Kentucky Home" or "Lead, Kindly Light," we are satisfied because the words give us the idea while the music arouses in us the appropriate emotional response.

The lyric, then, gives us the idea or theme and calls up appropriate pictures in language which is rich in suggestion, pictorial power, and sensuous beauty. The melody gives the poem greater expressiveness; and it does this by intensifying the emotion and adding a color and a richness which words alone cannot impart. Although

Rouget de Lisle wrote both words and air for the "Marseillaise" and Wagner wrote the librettos as well as the music of his operas, usually air and lyric are written by different persons. Ordinarily a musician like Schubert composes a melody for a poem like Shakespeare's "Hark, Hark, the Lark," or a poet like Mrs. Howe writes words for a well-known melody, as she did in "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." In every case, however, the poem and the air must blend to produce a harmonious whole.

There are more perfect melodies and far greater poems than the air and words of Stephen Collins Foster's "Old Folks at Home"; but in few other songs does one find so perfect a harmony between the two. The explanation is that Foster wrote both words and music for his songs. If the reader will read "Old Folks at Home" as a poem, he will find that it is not poetry of a high order; in fact, without the music the words seem colorless and conventional. When sung to the melody, however, they seem suddenly to have become alive, full of unsuspected color and feeling.

OLD FOLKS AT HOME

Way down upon de Swanee Ribber,
  Far, far away,
Dere's wha my heart is turning ebber,
  Dere's wha de old folks stay.
All up and down de whole creation
  Sadly I roam,
Still longing for de old plantation,
  And for de old folks at home.

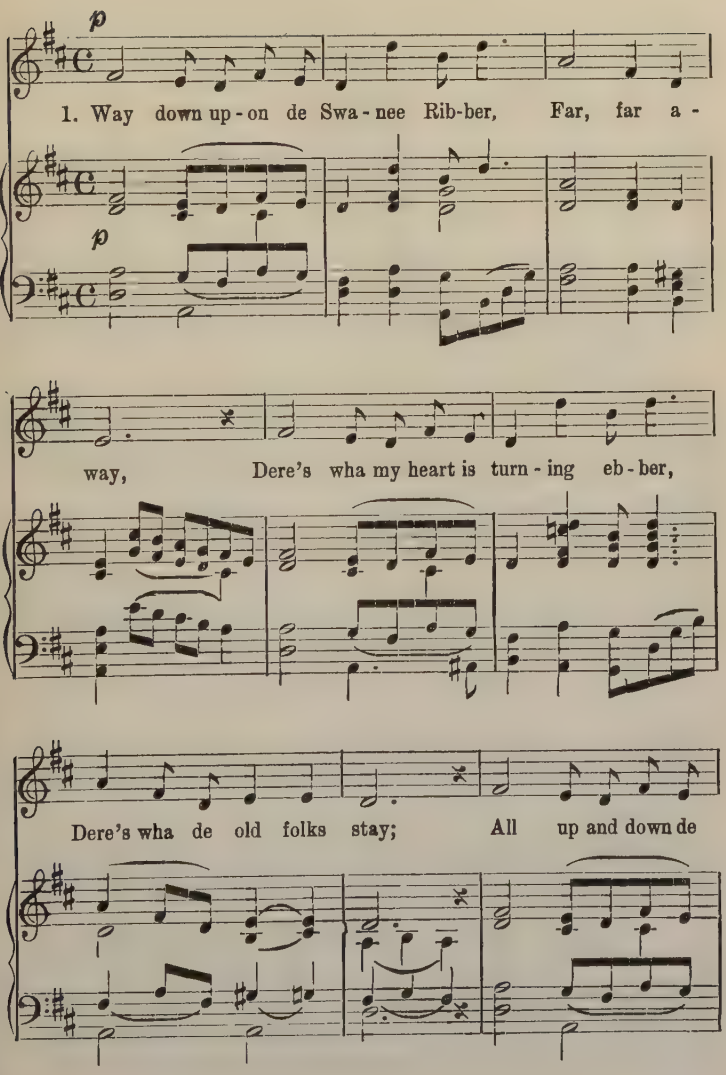
Chorus:

All de world am sad and dreary,
Eberywhere I roam;
Oh! darkeys, how my heart grows weary,
Far from de old folks at home!

All round de little farm I wandered
When I was young,
Den many happy days I squandered,
Many de songs I sung.
When I was playing wid my brudder,
Happy was I;
Oh, take me to my kind old mudder!
Dere let me live and die.

One little hut among de bushes,
One dat I love,
Still sadly to my memory rushes,
No matter where I rove.
When will I see de bees a-humming
All round de comb?
When will I hear de banjo tumming
Down in my good old home?

Stephen Collins Foster (*1826-1864*)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1. Way down up - on de Swa - nee Rib-ber, Far, far a -
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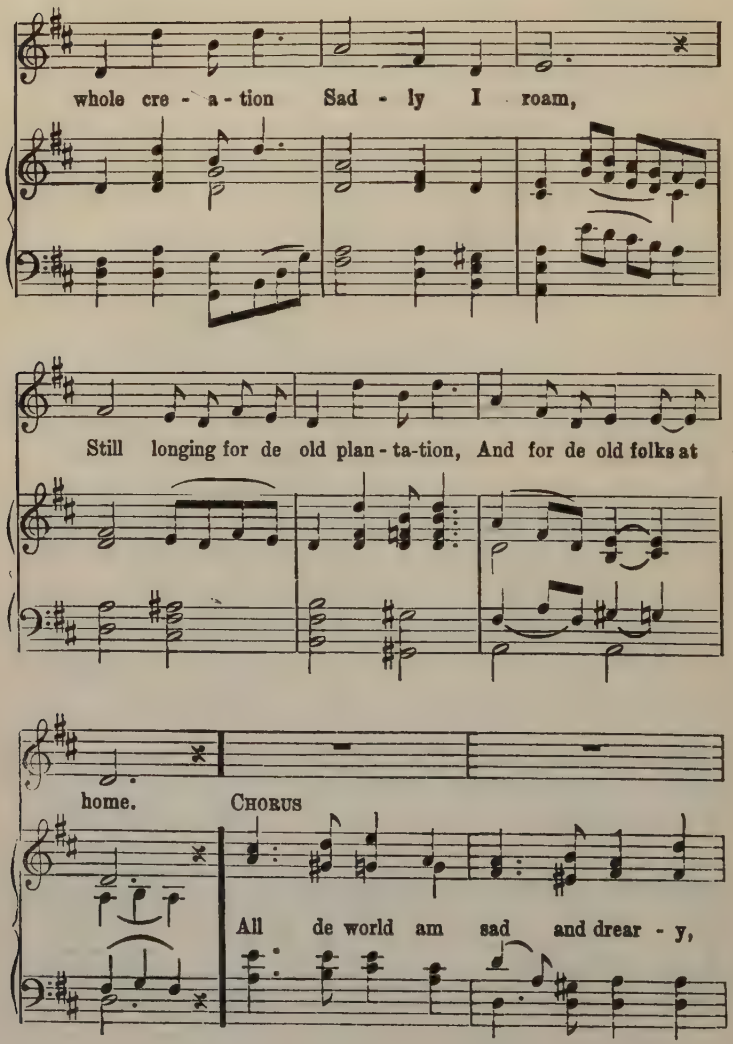
way, Dere's wha my heart is turn - ing eb - ber,
Dere's wha de old folks stay; All up and down de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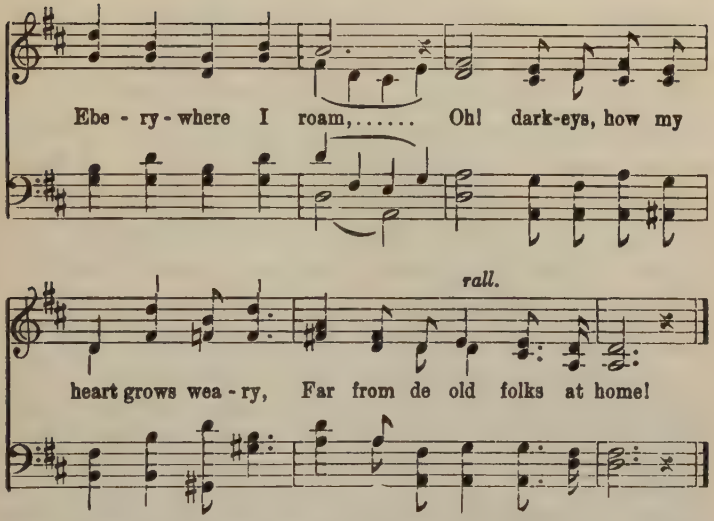
Still longing for de old plan - ta-tion, And for de old folks at
home.
CHORUS
All de world am sad and drear - y,



It is too much the fashion among musicians to think of the words of a song as comparatively unimportant. No mistake could be greater; for, as Shakespeare has put it, "Orpheus' lute was strung with poets' sinews." Without the words the air would seem to most of us unsatisfying and pointless. The poem not only gives us the key to the emotion which the music arouses; it also emphasizes it in every possible way. The theme of "Old Folks at Home" is the wanderer's longing for home and home folks. Every line of the poem calls up appropriate pictures of the darkey's home and relatives. Our emotions are attached to persons and things, and it is the part of the poet to picture them while the musician stirs our feelings. Foster's song illustrates perfectly one of Irving Berlin's eight rules for writing popular songs: "The title, which must be simple and easily remembered, must be 'planted'

effectively in the song. It must be emphasized, accented again and again, throughout verses and chorus."

Foster's songs come nearer to being distinctively American than any others that we possess; but in reality we have none that compare with the best songs of England, Scotland, and Ireland. Foster's are not, strictly speaking, negro songs; for the dialect is imperfect and negroes seldom sing them. The airs, nevertheless, are genuinely melodious and are not the echoes of European music. They are, however, colored by the sentimentality characteristic of much of our music and poetry. "The Old Oaken Bucket" and "A Perfect Day" illustrate this sentimental strain which vitiates many otherwise good songs.

Genuine negro folk-song is a very different thing from our parlor and vaudeville songs written in a pseudo-negro dialect. Most of the old negro airs are no longer sung by the negroes themselves, who now unfortunately prefer to sing the latest jazz tunes. Perhaps the best of the old negro camp-meeting songs is "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," the melody of which the Bohemian musician Dvořak used in his "New World Symphony."

SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT

Swing low, sweet chariot,
Comin' for to carry me home.

I looked over Jordan and what did I see,
Comin' for to carry me home?
A band of angels comin' aftah me,
Comin' for to carry me home.

If you git there before I do,
Comin' for to carry me home,
Tell all my frien's I'm a-comin', too,
Comin' for to carry me home.

The brightes' day that ever I saw,
Comin' for to carry me home,
When Jesus washed my sins away,
Comin' for to carry me home.

I'm sometimes up an' sometimes down,
Comin' for to carry me home,
But still my soul feel heavenly boun',
Coming for to carry me home.

From the art-song, which is the work of a known poet and a known musician, the folk-song differs in that no one knows who wrote either the melody or the words. The folk-song, although in many instances probably launched by an individual author, has been handed down by tradition until it has come to be the fitting expression of the spirit of a race. In poetic merit, it is, of course, inferior to the art-song; but its sincerity and its naturalness are inimitable.

The folk-song is the ultimate basis of both modern music and modern poetry. "From it," says Mrs. Wodehouse in her discussion of the *Song* in Grove's *Dictionary of Music*, "we have derived not only our scales, but the shape of our melodies, the outlines of our musical form, and indirectly the art of harmony and cadences." It follows that, as she points out, America has "no distinctive characteristics of her own in music. . . . Deprived as it has been of its natural foundation, *i. e.*, the folk-song, her national music must be formed on the indi-

viduality of her composers." Mrs. Wodehouse might have added with equal truth that American poetry has too often been feeble and imitative because it has little basis in native folk-lore apart from that of the negro and the Indian.

When poetry and music emerge from the twilight obscurity of prehistoric times, they are practically always found together. Among present-day savages, who preserve for us the chief clues to the origin of music and poetry, the two arts are still united. It is believed by most authorities that both poetry and music evolved from the dance, which is intimately related to primitive poetry and music. Rhythm is the element which unites these three arts, as form is the element common to painting, sculpture, and architecture.

The debt of modern poetry to the folk-song is clearly seen in the songs of Robert Burns, the greatest of all song-writers. Even before the time of Burns, Scotland had not only an almost unrivaled wealth of beautiful folk-melodies but a widespread interest in song. This folk-music preserves the humor and pathos of thousands of long dead singers. During the Reformation the singing of these songs was forbidden by the clergy; but they continued to be sung in secret. At merry-makings when no minister was present, "the wee sinfu' fiddle" was brought out and the old songs were sung. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, though the airs were as beautiful as ever, the words had nearly all become corrupt and often indecent. It was the task of Burns and other Scottish poets to fit to the old airs equally beautiful and appropriate poems.

With Burns, the poem grew directly out of the melody. He thus described his method of composition: "Until I am complete master of a tune in my own singing (such as it is), I can never compose to it. My way is: I consider the poetic sentiment corresponding to my idea of the musical expression, then choose my theme, begin one stanza, and when that is composed, which is generally the most difficult part of the business, I walk out, sit down now and then, look out for objects of nature around me that are in unison and harmony . . . humming every now and then the air with the verses I have composed. When I feel my muse beginning to jade, I retire to the solitary fireside of my study, and there commit my effusions to paper, swinging at intervals on the hind legs of my elbow chair by way of calling forth my own critical strictures as my pen goes on." In "Afton Water" Burns has thus wedded appropriate words to an old air. The Mary in whose honor the song was written seems not to have been the famous Highland Mary. A *brae* is a hillside facing a stream; *birk* is Scots for birch.

AFTON WATER

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes,
Flow gently, I'll sing thee a song in thy praise;
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

Thou stock-dove whose echo resounds thro' the glen,
Ye wild whistling blackbirds in yon thorny den,
Thou green-crested lapwing, thy screaming forbear,
I charge you disturb not my slumbering fair.

How lofty, sweet Afton, thy neighbouring hills,
Far mark'd with the courses of clear winding rills;
There daily I wander as noon rises high,
My flocks and my Mary's sweet cot in my eye.

How pleasant thy banks and green valleys below,
Where wild in the woodland the primroses blow;
There oft as mild Ev'ning weeps over the lea,
The sweet-scented birk shades my Mary and me.

Thy crystal stream, Afton, how lovely it glides,
And winds by the cot where my Mary resides;
How wanton thy waters her snowy feet lave,
As gathering sweet flow'rets she stems thy clear wave.

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes,
Flow gently, sweet river, the theme of my lays;
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream,
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream.

Robert Burns (*1759-1796*)

The Scottish dialect will give the reader little difficulty if he will observe certain simple rules. English *o* is usually represented by Scottish *a*, *ai*, or *au*, as in *amang*, *baith*, and *auld*. *K* is often found where English has *ch*, as in *birk* and *kirk*, for birch and church. Certain consonants are frequently omitted in Scots, especially *l* and *v*, as in *fa'* and *gi'e*.

Although all of Burns's songs are written to old airs, some of them, like "Afton Water" and "Highland Mary," are original poems. More often, however, Burns is found revising the words of a folk-song. Sometimes his changes are few; more often he recasts the entire poem. An excellent example of his revision is to be seen in "Auld

Lang Syne," which is perhaps the most widely known song in the language. Strangely enough, though the air we now sing fits the poem well, it is not the one for which it was written. Burns is here trying to express the feeling of friendship. Imagine two old friends meeting after many years to talk over old times—*auld lang syne* means old times, but it is more expressive than the English phrase. The first two lines in the second stanza mean I'll pay for my drink and you for yours; or, in modern slang, "We'll go Dutch." *Gowans* means daisies; *burn*, brook; *fiere*, comrade; *a right guid-willie waught*, a friendly drink.

AULD LANG SYNE

Should auld acquaintance be forgot
And never brought to min'?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot
And auld lang syne?

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp,
And surely I'll be mine;
And we'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.

We twa ha'e run about the braes,
And pu'd the gowans fine;
But we've wander'd mony a weary foot
Sin' auld lang syne.

We twa ha'e paidled i' the burn,
From morning sun till dine;
But seas between us braid ha'e roar'd
Sin' auld lang syne.

And there's a hand, my trusty fiere,
And gi'e's a hand o' thine;
And we'll tak' a right guid-willie waught,
For auld lang syne.

Robert Burns (*1759-1796*)

Love songs are perhaps the best and certainly the most popular of all songs. In this field Burns is supreme. American poetry, to our great discredit be it said, has hardly a single great love lyric. The best known of all Scottish love songs is "Annie Laurie." The poem was originally written by Annie Laurie's lover, William Douglas; but it was given its final form by Lady John Scott, to whom the air also has been ascribed.

ANNIE LAURIE

Maxwelton braes are bonnie,
Where early fa's the dew;
An' it's there that Annie Laurie
Gi'ed me her promise true;
Gi'ed me her promise true,
Which ne'er forgot sall be;
And for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doun and dee.

Her brow is like the snaw-drift,
Her throat is like the swan,
Her face it is the fairest
That e'er the sun shone on;

That e'er the sun shone on—
An' dark blue is her e'e;
An' for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doun and dee.

Like dew on the gowan lying
Is the fa' o' her fairy feet;
Like simmer breezes sighing,
Her voice is low an' sweet;
Her voice is low an' sweet—
An' she's a' the world to me;
An' for bonnie Annie Laurie
I'd lay me doun and dee.

William Douglas and Lady John Scott

Here we may pause to note how poems written to be sung differ from poems intended only to be read. The song must be simple and short. The metrical scheme must be simple and regular; free verse and prose are much more difficult to set to music, although many of the Psalms and some of Whitman's poems have been sung. The lines of a song should be end-stopped; that is, the pauses should come at the end. The lines of the poem should be of such length that one musical phrase will correspond exactly to one line or a group of lines. The poet and the musician should stress the same syllables, as Foster does in "Old Folks at Home." Composers too often stress unimportant words like *an, the, by,* and *shall.* Above all, the words must be singable. Imagine yourself trying to sing Browning's line,

Flouts Castle Brancepeth the Roundheads' array!

The liquids, *l, m, n, ng, r,* are easiest to sing. The singer dislikes especially the hissing sounds, *s, sh,* and *ch,* which

are common in English and German. It is by no means true, however, that the English language is poorly adapted to singing. The vowel sounds require careful attention on the part of poet and composer. The open vowel sounds, such as *a* in *father*, *i* in *time*, *ow* in *down*, *e* in *ever*, are preferable to the close sounds of *u* in *full*, *oo* in *woo*, and *ee* in *meet*. The open vowels are easier for the singer to sustain and increase in volume. For this reason singers prefer the less common pronunciation of the noun *wind*, riming it with *blind* rather than with *thinned*.

Some of the most beautiful songs in English were written by the dramatic poets of Queen Elizabeth's time. Many of the Elizabethan actors had sung in church choirs before going on the stage. Shakespeare's plays are full of lovely little lyrics, such as "O Mistress Mine," "Under the Greenwood Tree," and "Tell me Where is Fancy Bred." Perhaps the best of all his songs is "Hark, Hark, the Lark," which in *Cymbeline* is sung at dawn by a lover just outside his sweetheart's door. If this song has any defect, it is Shakespeare's partiality to *s*'s. The poem has been admirably set to music by Schubert, whom Liszt described as "the most poetical musician that ever wrote."

HARK, HARK, THE LARK

Hark! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
  And Phœbus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
  On chalic'd flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
  To ope their golden eyes:

With everything that pretty is,
My lady sweet, arise:
Arise, arise.

William Shakespeare (*1564-1616*)

Shakespeare's friend and fellow-dramatist, Ben Jonson, wrote many beautiful songs. The only one which is now widely known is his "Song to Celia." The second stanza, which is hardly in keeping with the first, is marred by a "conceit," a far-fetched figure of speech which the Elizabethans admired.

SONG TO CELIA

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine;
But might I of Jove's nectar sip,
I would not change for thine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honoring thee
As giving it a hope, that there
It could not wither'd be.
But thou thereon didst only breathe,
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself, but thee.

Ben Jonson (*1573-1637*)

Thomas Moore, the Irish poet, tried to do for his country what Burns had done for Scotland. His songs

are melodious and pretty, but they are too sentimental and artificial; they belong to the English parlor, not to the Irish countryside. Though written for old Irish airs, the lyrics are not genuinely Irish. Some of them, however, such as "The Last Rose of Summer" and "Oft in the Stilly Night," are still well known.

BELIEVE ME, IF ALL THOSE ENDEARING YOUNG CHARMS

Believe me, if all those endearing young charms
  Which I gaze on so fondly to-day,
Were to change by to-morrow, and fleet in my arms,
  Like fairy-gifts fading away,
Thou wouldst still be adored, as this moment thou art,
  Let thy loveliness fade as it will;
And around the dear ruin each wish of my heart
  Would entwine itself verdantly still.

It is not while beauty and youth are thine own,
  And thy cheeks unprofaned by a tear,
That the fervor and faith of a soul may be known
  To which time will but make thee more dear;
No, the heart that has truly loved never forgets,
  But as truly loves on to the close,
As the sunflower turns on her god when he sets
  The same look which she turned when he rose.

Thomas Moore (*1779-1852*)

Many of the old airs are best known today as college songs. "Fair Harvard," perhaps the best American representative of this type, is sung to the air of "Believe me if All those Endearing Young Charms." It is adapted

to formal occasions like commencements and alumni reunions, not to athletic rallies and contests.

FAIR HARVARD

Fair Harvard! thy sons to thy jubilee throng
And with blessings surrender thee o'er,
By these festival rites, from the age that is past
To the age that is waiting before.
O relic and type of our ancestors' worth
That has long kept their memory warm,
First flower of their wilderness, star of their night,
Calm rising through change and through storm.

To thy bowers we were led in the bloom of our youth
From the home of our infantile years,
When our fathers had warned, and our mothers had prayed,
And our sisters had blest, through their tears!
Thou then wert our parent, the nurse of our souls;
We were moulded to manhood by thee,
Till freighted with treasure-thoughts, friendships, and hopes,
Thou didst launch us on Destiny's sea.

When, as pilgrims, we come, to revisit thy halls,
To what kindlings the season gives birth!
Thy shades are most soothing, thy sunlight more dear,
Than descend on less privileged earth;
For the good and the great in their beautiful prime
Through thy precincts have musingly trod
As they guided their spirits or deepened the streams
That make glad the fair city of God.

Farewell, be thy destinies onward and bright!
To thy children the lesson still give

With freedom to think, and with patience to bear,
  And for right ever bravely to live.
Let not moss-covered error moor thee at its side
  As the world on truth's current glides by;
Be the herald of light and the bearer of love
  Till the stock of the Puritans die!

Rev. Samuel Gilman (1791-1858)

The hymn is probably the one kind of song which has lost nothing of its original importance in an age when poems are coming more and more to be read rather than sung. Yet, although there are a few hymns of great poetic beauty, it is a strange fact, admitted by every one, that most hymns have no poetic merit. This is partly explained by the fact that most hymns are written not by poets, but by ministers, who are naturally more concerned with the teaching of a moral than with the poetic expression of a great emotion. We should also remember that while inferior secular songs die a natural death, thousands of poor hymns are preserved in the hymnals. The great hymn is usually the product of a religious awakening such as that led by Whitefield and the Wesley brothers in the eighteenth century. The greatest hymn of modern times, it seems to us, is Cardinal Newman's "Lead, Kindly Light." The hymn reflects the doubt and gloom through which Newman, the leader of the Oxford Movement, passed before he attained faith and peace. The only serious defect in the poem when judged as a song is that there are too many "run-on" lines; there ought to be a pause at the end of each line.

LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT

Lead, kindly light, amid th' encircling gloom,
  Lead thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home;
  Lead thou me on!
Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor prayed that thou
  Shouldst lead me on;
I loved to choose and see my path; but now
  Lead thou me on!
I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will. Remember not past years!

So long thy power hath blest me, sure it still
  Will lead me on
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
  The night is gone,
And with the morn those angel faces smile,
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile!

John Henry Newman (*1801-1890*)

Unlike the love song, the patriotic song is not the expression of the emotion of a single individual; like the hymn, it is the expression of the feeling of the crowd. Just as most hymns are written during a time of strong religious feeling, so most patriotic songs are written in war-time; for it is war, not peace, which calls out the passionate love of country. The great national song cannot be made to order; it must await the conjunction of the man and the hour, and, curiously enough, it is

almost never the work of a great poet. Great writers like Wordsworth and Milton stand too far apart from the crowd to write representative national songs. Who can recall off-hand the authors of "America," "The Watch on the Rhine," and "Dixie"?

The American national anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner," was written not by a Poe, a Longfellow, or a Whitman, but by a Baltimore lawyer named Francis Scott Key, who is known for nothing else. The poem was written during the bombardment of Fort McHenry by the British in 1814. Key, who had gone aboard the British fleet under a flag of truce to see a friend, was detained, and thus came to witness the bombardment during the night. In the morning he looked anxiously to see if the Stars and Stripes was still waving. Key wrote the poem immediately and set it to an English air, "To Anacreon in Heaven." Both the air and the poem are difficult to sing; for the music has a wider compass than the average voice, and the lines are full of heavy unstressed syllables and difficult combinations of consonants.

THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

Oh, say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
  What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, thro' the clouds of the fight,
  O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
  Gave proof thro' the night that our flag was still there;
Oh, say, does that Star-Spangled banner yet wave
  O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave?

Chorus:

Oh, say, does the Star-Spangled Banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave?

On that shore dimly seen thro' the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, now conceals, now discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines in the stream;
'Tis the Star-Spangled banner; oh, long may it wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave!

And where is the band who so vauntingly swore,
Mid the havoc of war and the battle's confusion,
A home and a country they'd leave us no more?
Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From terror of flight or the gloom of the grave;
And the Star-Spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

Oh! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand
Between their loved home, and the war's desolation!
Blest with victory and peace, may the heav'n-rescued land
Praise the Power that made and preserved us a nation.
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto, *"In God is our trust!"*
And the Star-Spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

Francis Scott Key (*1780-1843*)

"America" was written in 1832 by Samuel Francis Smith, a Baptist minister and a classmate at Harvard of Oliver Wendell Holmes. Until after he had written the

lyric, Smith did not know that he had composed it to the air of the English anthem, "God Save the King." The tune, however, is not certainly of English origin. The words of "God Save the King," and often the air as well, have been attributed to Henry Carey, who is supposed to have written the song about 1740.

AMERICA

My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet Land of Liberty,
  Of thee I sing;
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrims' pride,
From every mountain-side
  Let Freedom ring.

My native country, thee,
Land of the noble free,—
  Thy name I love;
I love thy rocks and rills,
Thy woods and templed hills,
My heart with rapture thrills
  Like that above.

Let music swell the breeze,
And ring from all the trees,
  Sweet Freedom's song;
Let mortal tongues awake;
Let all that breathe partake;
Let rocks their silence break,—
  The sound prolong.

Our fathers' God, to Thee,
Author of Liberty,
  To Thee I sing;

Long may our land be bright
With Freedom's holy light;
Protect us by Thy might,
  Great God, our King.

Samuel Francis Smith (*1808-1895*)

GOD SAVE THE KING

God save our gracious King!
Long live our noble King!
  God save the King!
Send him victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us!
  God save the King!

O Lord our God, arise!
Scatter his enemies,
  And make them fall;
Confound their politics,
Frustrate their knavish tricks:
On Thee our hopes we fix—
  God save us all!

Thy choicest gifts in store
On him be pleased to pour;
  Long may he reign!
May he defend our laws,
And ever give us cause
To sing with heart and voice
  God save the King!

Henry Carey ? (*d. 1743*)

The best American national songs date from about the time of the Civil War, the one great crisis which has

stirred the nation to its depths. The words of most of the songs which the soldiers preferred have little merit beyond sincerity of feeling. "Dixie," the Confederate favorite, was written for a negro minstrel show, on one Sunday in 1859 by an Ohioan, Dan Emmett. The words, like those of "Yankee Doodle," are trivial; but the more poetic version of General Pike, "Southrons, Hear Your Country Call You," never became popular with the soldiers. A Harvard professor of music has referred to "Dixie" as the best and most truly American of all our national airs. "Dixie" is as popular in the North as in the South; we respond to it as we do to no other patriotic air.

The Northern soldier's favorite, "John Brown's Body," is sung to an old negro camp-meeting tune. Since the authorship is still in dispute, it seems best to class "John Brown's Body" as a folk-song; the merits of the words are the merits of folk poetry—simplicity, naturalness, and directness.

JOHN BROWN'S BODY

John Brown's body lies a-mould'ring in the grave,
John Brown's body lies a-mould'ring in the grave,
John Brown's body lies a-mould'ring in the grave,
His soul is marching on!

Chorus:

Glory! Glory Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory Hallelujah!
Glory! Glory Hallelujah!
His soul is marching on.

He's gone to be a soldier in the army of the Lord!
His soul is marching on.

John Brown's knapsack is strapped upon his back.
His soul is marching on.

His pet lambs will meet him on the way,
And they'll go marching on.

They'll hang Jeff Davis to a sour apple tree,
As they go marching on.

Now for the Union let's give three rousing cheers,
As we go marching on.
Hip, hip, hip, hip, Hurrah!

Mrs. Julia Ward Howe's poem, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," resulted from an attempt to fit more elevated words to the tune of "John Brown's Body," which is undoubtedly one of the best of our military airs. She wrote the poem one night in December, 1861, after a visit to McClellan's army. The leading idea in the poem, according to Mrs. Howe, is "the sacredness of human liberty." "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" differs from the great majority of the war poems, "My Maryland," for instance, in the almost complete absence of sectional bitterness. It has the permanent quality which makes it appropriate to every struggle for human liberty. "The music made the words of 'John Brown's Body' famous," says Colonel Nicholas Smith, "but Mrs. Howe's matchless battle song has made the melody immortal." In her poem the song, originally a hymn, has become a hymn again, a great religious processional.

THE BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath
are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword:
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I have read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps.
His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel:
"As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall
deal;
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with His heel,
Since God is marching on."

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat:
Oh! be swift, my soul, to answer Him, be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me:
As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on.

Julia Ward Howe (*1819-1910*)

The "Marseillaise of the Confederacy," "My Maryland," now, after "My Old Kentucky Home," the best known of our state songs, was written in April, 1861, by James Ryder Randall. While teaching in Poydras College in Louisiana, Randall read an account of an attack

upon some Union troops in his native city of Baltimore. The poem was written in much the same way as "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," as one may see from Randall's own account of its composition: "I had long been absent from my native city, and the startling event there inflamed my mind. That night I could not sleep, for my nerves were all unstrung, and I could not dismiss what I read in the paper from my mind. About midnight I rose, lit a candle, and went to my desk. Some powerful spirit appeared to possess me, and almost involuntarily I proceeded to write the song of 'My Maryland.' I remember that the idea appeared to first take shape as music in the brain—some wild air that I cannot now recall. The whole poem was dashed off rapidly when once begun. It was not composed in cold blood, but under what may be called a conflagration of the senses, if not an inspiration of the intellect."

The poem, in fact, has a superb fire and power,—to which the air scarcely does justice,—that make it worthy of comparison with Bruce's "Bannockburn" and Campbell's "Ye Mariners of England." Two Baltimore girls, Jennie and Hetty Cary, adapted the poem to an old German air, then popular as a Yale song under the title of "Lauriger Horatius." Stanzas three and four call the roll of famous Marylanders who had borne a distinguished part in earlier wars. *Sic semper*, in the sixth stanza, is part of the motto of the state of Virginia, *Sic Semper Tyrannis*, "Thus always to tyrants."

MY MARYLAND

The despot's heel is on thy shore,
Maryland!
His torch is at thy temple door,
Maryland!
Avenge the patriotic gore
That flecked the streets of Baltimore,
And be the battle-queen of yore,
Maryland, my Maryland!

Hark to an exiled son's appeal,
Maryland!
My Mother State, to thee I kneel,
Maryland!
For life and death, for woe and weal,
Thy peerless chivalry reveal,
And gird thy beauteous limbs with steel,
Maryland, my Maryland!

Thou wilt not cower in the dust,
Maryland!
Thy beaming sword shall never rust,
Maryland!
Remember Carroll's sacred trust,
Remember Howard's warlike thrust,
And all thy slumberers with the just,
Maryland, my Maryland!

Come! 'tis the red dawn of the day,
Maryland!
Come with thy panoplied array,
Maryland!
With Ringgold's spirit for the fray,
With Watson's blood at Monterey,
With fearless Lowe and dashing May,
Maryland, my Maryland!

Dear Mother, burst the tyrant's chain,
Maryland!
Virginia should not call in vain,
Maryland!
She meets her sisters on the plain,—
"Sic semper!" 'tis the proud refrain
That baffles minions back again,
Maryland!
Arise in majesty again,
Maryland, my Maryland!

Come! for thy shield is bright and strong,
Maryland!
Come! for thy dalliance does thee wrong,
Maryland!
Come to thine own heroic throng,
Stalking with Liberty along,
And chant thy dauntless slogan-song,
Maryland, my Maryland!

I see the blush upon thy cheek,
Maryland!
For thou wast ever bravely meek,
Maryland!
But lo! there surges forth a shriek,
From hill to hill, from creek to creek,
Potomac calls to Chesapeake,
Maryland, my Maryland!

Thou wilt not yield the Vandal toll,
Maryland!
Thou wilt not crook to his control,
Maryland!
Better the fire upon thee roll,
Better the shot, the blade, the bowl,
Than crucifixion of the soul,
Maryland, my Maryland!

I hear the distant thunder hum,
Maryland!
The Old Line's bugle, fife, and drum,
Maryland!
She is not dead, nor deaf, nor dumb;
Huzza! she spurns the Northern scum!
She breathes! She burns! She'll come! She'll come!
Maryland, my Maryland!
James Ryder Randall (1839-1908)

Nothing is stranger than the migrations of patriotic airs. Both "America" and "The Star-Spangled Banner" were written for English airs. "Dixie" was written by a Northerner. Foster, the most famous author of negro songs, was born in Pennsylvania. The air of "John Brown's Body" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" was originally Southern. The English poet, William Morris, borrowed this tune for his "March of the Workers." At the close of the Civil War Lincoln asked a band to play "Dixie," and said, "As we have captured the Confederate army, we have also captured the Confederate tune, and both belong to us." In other words, as Brander Matthews puts it, "In the hour of battle a war-tune is subject to the right of capture, and, like the cannon taken from the enemy, it is turned against its maker."

Although songs are too various to permit a discussion here of all the types, some further examples are necessary to illustrate the rare excellence of the form. One of the best of recent songs is Robert Louis Stevenson's "Requiem," which has been set to music by Sidney Homer.

REQUIEM

Under the wide and starry sky,
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.
Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894)

Another superb song, of a different kind, is Kipling's "The Gipsy Trail," which has been widely sung to an air by Tod B. Galloway. *Romany* means gipsy; *gorgio*, one who is not a gipsy; *Austral*, southern.

THE GIPSY TRAIL

The white moth to the closing bine,
The bee to the opened clover,
And the gipsy blood to the gipsy blood
Ever the wide world over.

Ever the wide world over, lass,
Ever the trail held true,
Over the world and under the world,
And back at the last to you.

Out of the dark of the gorgio camp,
Out of the grime and the gray
(Morning waits at the end of the world),
Gipsy, come away!

The wild boar to the sun-dried swamp,
  The red crane to her reed,
And the Romany lass to the Romany lad
  By the tie of a roving breed.

The pied snake to the rifted rock,
  The buck to the stony plain,
And the Romany lass to the Romany lad,
  And both to the road again.

Both to the road again, again!
  Out on a clean sea-track—
Follow the cross of the gipsy trail
  Over the world and back!

Follow the Romany patteran
  North where the blue bergs sail,
And the bows are gray with the frozen spray,
  And the masts are shod with mail.

Follow the Romany patteran
  Sheer to the Austral Light,
Where the besom of God is the wild South wind,
  Sweeping the sea-floors white.

Follow the Romany patteran
  West to the sinking sun,
Till the junk-sails lift through the houseless drift,
  And the east and the west are one.

Follow the Romany patteran
  East where the silence broods
By a purple wave on an opal beach
  In the hush of the Mahim woods.

"The wild hawk to the wind-swept sky,
The deer to the wholesome wold
And the heart of a man to the heart of a maid,
As it was in the days of old."

The heart of a man to the heart of a maid—
Light of my tents, be fleet.
Morning waits at the end of the world,
And the world is all at our feet!

Rudyard Kipling (*1865-*)

Up to this point we have included only lyrics which are still sung to familiar melodies. There are, however, a very large number of poems which were written for airs that are now forgotten. These songs we must judge solely as poetry. The Scotch know Burns's immortal "John Anderson" as a song, but the rest of us know it only as a poem. Unlike most songs, it has sufficient poetic merit to enable it to dispense with the air. It is a love song of somewhat the same type as "Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms" and "Silver Threads among the Gold"; but it is incomparably greater poetry, and it has not the slightest trace of the false sentiment which mars these popular songs. *Jo* means sweetheart; *acquent*, acquainted; *brent*, smooth, unwrinkled; *beld*, bald; *pow*, head; *canty*, cheerful, happy.

JOHN ANDERSON

John Anderson my jo, John,
When we were first acquent,
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonnie brow was brent;

But now your brow is beld, John,
Your locks are like the snaw;
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson, my jo.

John Anderson my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither;
And mony a canty day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither:
Now we maun totter down, John,
And hand in hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson, my jo.

Robert Burns (*1759-1796*)

Emerson's "Concord Hymn," one of the finest of American patriotic lyrics, was sung in 1837 at the completion of the monument erected in memory of the soldiers killed at Concord Bridge in the first fighting of the Revolution. Few poems written for special occasions have attained the apparent immortality which has come to this song.

CONCORD HYMN

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream that seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set to-day a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

When a nation passes out of the more primitive stages of civilization, the connection between music and poetry becomes less and less intimate. Poems gradually cease to be sung, although for a time they are chanted much as a negro preacher of the old school chants his sermons. Finally, poems come simply to be spoken or read much as we read prose. The vast majority of poems written today are written with no thought of a musical accompaniment; and the longer, more ambitious forms of music, such as the sonata and the symphony, have no words to accompany them. Even yet, however, the original connection between music and poetry is kept up in hymns, popular songs, musical comedies, and operas. Furthermore, all poets from Homer to Kipling, according to William Butler Yeats, chant their poems when they read them aloud.

Both loss and gain for each art result from this divorce of music and poetry. Music gains immensely in freedom and range. Later music attempts sometimes to rival poetry even in imparting ideas; just how successfully musicians do not always agree. In the *Overture* to

William Tell Rossini describes a storm on a lake so clearly that one hardly feels the need of words. A great deal of later music, however, is intelligible only to trained musicians; and music, at least of the best kind, is no longer the possession of the whole people.

For poetry also there is both loss and gain. Let us first consider the loss side of the ledger. When poetry ceases to be sung, it loses its appeal to many readers, who, missing the musical accompaniment, find the poem cold and dull. Thus poetry, like music, ceases to be the possession of the whole people and becomes the property of a class. Later poetry often lacks the spontaneity, simplicity, and sincerity of the folk-song. The work of the great poets frequently requires too much culture and too great a knowledge of technique to be readily understood. The ode and the sonnet lack the warmth and the color of the song. The poet who uses the more complex forms often writes of themes remote from the average man and woman; and, instead of depicting the great simple passions of mankind, he tries too often to express the subtler and less universal emotions. The language of poetry often becomes artificial, and sometimes ceases to be a spoken language at all. Poems come to be written for the eye, not for the ear. Even the rimes, as often with Tennyson, are meant for the eye alone.

But in poetry, as in music, the gain is far greater than the loss. "The Ode to a Nightingale" and "The Moonlight Sonata" are greater works of art than "Highland Mary" and "Annie Laurie." In meter, in language, in ideas, even in emotions, the range of the song is narrow when compared with other forms of poetry. The later

poet, writing merely to be read, finds open to him many new fields. Being no longer limited to the song and the ballad, he is free to cultivate the longer narrative, dramatic, and reflective forms. He gives a stronger emphasis to both form and content. After all, however, other forms of poetry are, when compared with the song, essentially less poetic and nearer the level of prose, for the singing quality is of the very essence of poetry.

Poetry, when divorced from music, develops a kind of music of its own. Human speech as well as music has its own peculiar melody and rhythm. "Speech-tunes," as Sidney Lanier called them, are almost impossible to write down in any musical scale because of the minute differences in pitch and time; but they are of the greatest importance for the poet. Lord Houghton tells us that "one of Keats's favorite topics of conversation was the principle of melody in verse, which he believed to consist in the adroit management of open and close vowels. He had a theory that vowels could be as skilfully combined and interchanged as differing notes of music and that all sense of monotony was to be avoided except when expressive of a special purpose." A stanza from Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale" furnishes an almost perfect illustration of his theory.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down:
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,

She stood in tears amid the alien corn:
The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

With this superb example of word melody, compare some intentionally unmusical lines written by Lanier to show the effect of monotony in vowel sounds,

'Tis May-day gay: wide-smiling skies shine bright
Through whose true blue cuckoos do woo anew
The tender spring, etc.

A study of the most musical English and American poets—Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, Tennyson, Swinburne, Yeats, Poe, and Lanier—will teach one much about this word music in poetry. The skilful poet uses all the resources at his command, rime, alliteration, assonance, onomatopœia; and he varies his stresses, his pauses, and the length and the rhythm of his lines.

How this word melody of the poet differs from that of the song will be evident from the following quotation from an English critic, John Addington Symonds: "I once asked an eminent musician, the late Madame Goldschmidt, why Shelley's lyrics were ill-adapted to music. She made me read aloud to her the *Song of Pan* and those lovely lines *To the* [sic] *Night*, 'Swiftly walk over the western wave, Spirit of Night!' Then she pointed out how the verbal melody was intended to be self-sufficing in these lyrics, how full of complicated thoughts and changeful images the verse is, how packed with consonants the words are, how the tone of the emotion alters, and how

no one melodic phrase could be found to fit the dædal woof of the poetic emotion."

TO NIGHT

Swiftly walk o'er the western wave,
Spirit of Night!
Out of thy misty eastern cave,
Where all the long and lone daylight,
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
Which make thee terrible and dear,—
Swift be thy flight!

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,
Star-inwrought!
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day;
Kiss her until she be wearied out,
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land
Touching all with thine opiate wand—
Come, long sought!

When I arose and saw the dawn,
I sighed for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turned to his rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sighed for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
Wouldst thou me?
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmured like a noontide bee,
Shall I nestle near thy side?
Wouldst thou me?—And I replied,
No, not thee!

Death will come when thou art dead
Soon, too soon—
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, belovèd Night—
Swift be thine approaching flight,
Come soon, soon!

Percy Bysshe Shelley (*1792-1822*)

Although Tennyson's subject matter is often commonplace, no later poet has surpassed him in poetic music. His "Crossing the Bar" has tempted many a composer; and yet it hardly seems to require a musical setting, so perfect is the verbal melody which Tennyson gave it. The poem was written in the poet's eighty-first year, and by his direction it is placed last in every edition of his poems. The "Pilot" Tennyson explained as "That Divine and Unseen Who is always guiding us."

CROSSING THE BAR

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

Tennyson's "Sweet and Low," one of the lyrics in *The Princess*, is as musical as "Crossing the Bar," but it has been wedded by Barnby to an air which fits it admirably. The song is one of the most beautiful lullabies in the language.

SWEET AND LOW

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea!
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me:
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
Under the silver moon;
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

No living poet has written more melodious verse than William Butler Yeats. The following song from his poetic drama, *The Land of Heart's Desire*, is as musical as the best of Elizabethan songs.

SONG from THE LAND OF HEART'S DESIRE

The wind blows out of the gates of day,
The wind blows over the lonely of heart,
And the lonely of heart is withered away
While the faeries dance in a place apart,
Shaking their milk-white feet in a ring,
Tossing their milk-white arms in the air;
For they hear the wind laugh and murmur and sing
Of a land where even the old are fair,
And even the wise are merry of tongue;
"But I heard a reed of Coolaney say,
When the wind has laughed and murmured and sung,
The lonely of heart is withered away."

William Butler Yeats (1865-)

For the last two centuries the lyric, which includes the song, has been the predominant type of poetry. This anthology is therefore concerned chiefly with lyric poetry. Of this important type, Professor Bliss Perry has written in his admirable *Study of Poetry:* "The lyric is the commonest, and yet, in its perfection, the rarest type of poetry; the earliest, and yet the most modern; the simplest, and yet in its laws of emotional association, perhaps the most complex; and it is all these because it expresses, more intimately than other types of verse, the personality of the poet." In the chapters which follow we shall study the meter, style, and subject matter of the lyric. Once again, however, in the chapter on the ballad, we shall return to the poem which is sung and note once more the debt of later poetry to the folk-song and the folk-ballad.

CHAPTER III

THE DUPLE METERS

Trōchĕĕ trīps frŏm lōng tŏ shōrt;
From long to long in solemn sort
Slōw spōndēē stālks; strōng fōōt! yea ill able
Ēvĕr tŏ cōme ŭp wĭth Dāctўl trĭsўllăblĕ.
Ĭāmbĭcs mārch frŏm shōrt tŏ lōng;—
Wĭth ă lēap ănd ă bōūnd thĕ swĭft Ānăpæsts thrōng.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge:
"Metrical Feet: Lesson for a Boy"

ALL persons acquainted with musical notation will recall that every normal composition consists of certain small units—bars—of equal length. Just as one finds in music common time, three-fourths time, and the like, one recognizes in poetry certain regularly recurring minor units. These units are based not, as in music, upon time, but upon the accent of English words. In prose, accented and unaccented syllables occur in an irregular order; in poetry, the arrangement is usually alternate and normally regular. In the following lines, from a song in Alfred Noyes's romantic epic *Drake*, the accented syllables are marked with an *a* and the unaccented with an *x*—conventional symbols which will be employed throughout this study:

x *a* | *x* *a* | *x* *a* | *x* *a*
The moon is up: The stars are bright:

x a | x a | x a
The wind is fresh and free!
x a | x a | x a | x a
We're out to seek for gold to-night
x a | x a | x a
Across the silver sea!

The notation here, it will be observed, agrees exactly with the pronunciation of everyday speech. The words could not conceivably be accented in any other than the indicated way. The unit, it will also be noticed, consists of two syllables, the first unaccented, the second accented. This, or any similar minor unit of poetry, is called a *foot*. The marking or determination of feet is called *scansion*. The foot *xa* is known as an *iamb*, or an *iambus;* and the meter of the above selection is consequently described as *iambic*.

The determination of stress is, however, not usually as easy as in this mechanically perfect passage. Consider the lines:

a x a
To sing in thoughtful ease this natural song

and

x a x
Where lay the porter in uneasy sprawl.

In the first of these lines *in* is unaccented; in the second, it is accented. These examples show an important characteristic of English accent—the fact that it is largely relative. As in the case of *in* here, many short words or syllables are accented or unaccented according to the stress received by the adjacent syllables. These and other

irregularities will be more fully discussed below. They are, of course, not a fault, for they contribute to the flexibility of English poetry.

The question of time in English verse is much mooted. The analogy with music is suggestive, but may be carried too far. In the system of scansion, known to all who have read Vergil's *Æneid* in the original, length of syllable rather than accent is the criterion. This system should not be applied to English poetry—especially in an elementary treatise. A word like *strength* manifestly requires for its utterance more time than a word like *the;* but, when the two occur together, the longer word normally receives the accent:

x a | x a | x a | x a
My strength is as the strength of ten.

Even with the long word *through* in an unaccented position, no one would hesitate to read the following line as we have marked it:

x a | x a | x a | x a
Through broad and fen the Norfolk men.

Most authorities thus agree that in English verse time is, in comparison with accent, of slight or at least secondary importance and need be considered chiefly in avoiding heavy syllables in unaccented positions—a fault which has been referred to as marring "The Star-Spangled Banner." In many treatises on versification, the symbols ⏑ and – are used to denote unaccented and accented syllables respectively. These symbols are derived from classical prosody and should not be used in

English with their usual names *short* and *long*, except with the understanding that these terms have no necessary reference to the amount of time required for pronouncing a syllable.

In addition to the iambic there are three other frequently occurring feet: the *trochee (ax)*, the *anapest (xxa)*, and the *dactyl (axx)*. These are respectively exemplified in the three lines below. The corresponding adjectives are *trochaic*, *anapestic*, and *dactylic*.

a x | a x | a x | a x
Happy field or mossy cavern.
x x a | x x a | x x a | x x a
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold.
a x x | a x x
Take her up tenderly.

The four types of feet thus far exemplified are all which need consideration in an elementary study. The numerous additional types listed in treatises on versification have no real place in English except in imitations of Latin and other foreign rhythms. A few of these exotic feet are the *pyrrhic (xx)*, the *spondee (aa)*, the *amphibrach* (*xax*), the *amphimacer* (*axa*), the *anapestic pæon* (*xxxa*), and the *dactylic pæon* (*axxx*). Attempts at employing these feet, as well as imitations of the classical meters, are usually, by the ordinary reader, felt to be either free verse or approximations at various combinations of the four familiar meters.

The four English meters—iambic, trochaic, anapestic, dactylic—may be divided according to two criteria. The iambic and anapestic meters are, in the first place, some-

times classed together as *ascending* or *rising* meters because they begin with a light syllable and pass to a stressed syllable; and, for the opposite reason, the trochaic and dactylic meters are classed together as *descending* or *falling*. This classification is logical and convenient; that it is not fundamental may be shown by citing the fact that from the latter half of a line it is often impossible to determine whether a measure is ascending or descending. A second and more important division is made between the iambic and trochaic meters on the one hand, and the anapestic and dactylic on the other. The meters whose feet consist of two syllables are called *double* or *duple;* those whose feet consist of three syllables are called *triple*. The double meters present a steady alternation between stressed and unstressed syllables, while the movement of the triple meters is more rapid. The distinction between double and triple rhythms is natural; it is sensed by the ear throughout a poem.

Since English nouns and verbs are commonly preceded by weaker parts of speech, particularly articles and pronouns, the first syllable in a sentence is likely to bear no accent, and English poetry accordingly is much more frequently ascending than descending. Moreover, since accented and unaccented syllables occur in approximately equal proportions, English poetry is much more frequently duple than triple. In fact, ever since the modern type of versification displaced the Old English alliterative poetry, the iambic rhythm, which is at once duple and ascending, has been the standard English rhythm. It is the vehicle of most of the great poetry of the language. The naturalness of the iambic rhythm may be further

shown by pointing out that lofty prose often has an iambic quality. Well-known examples are Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address," and the concluding pages of Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities.*

Variety in metrical compositions is achieved in two ways. There is, of course, in every poem a phrasal rhythm, as in prose. The happy blending of meter and this natural rhythm gives poetry a variety within regularity which is one of its greatest charms. Again, one foot is—within certain limitations—often substituted for another.

Common as is the iambic meter, a poem with no substituted feet is not the rule but the rare exception. Among Byron's *Hebrew Melodies* is found a poem which is purely iambic except for the first foot in the fourth line. This foot must be read not *xa* but *ax;* it is trochaic. In the first foot of an iambic line the trochee is a legitimate substitution which affords variety and emphasis.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

She walks in beauty, like the night
  Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
  Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
  Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
  Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
  Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
  How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!
George Noel Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824)

The second duple meter, the trochaic, has already been partly described. The following selections are scanned respectively:

ax | *ax* | *ax* | *a*

and

ax | *ax* | *ax* | *ax.*

Queen and Huntress, chaste and fair,
Now the sun is laid to sleep,
Seated in thy silver chair
State in wonted manner keep. . . .
From "Hymn to Diana," by Ben Jonson

Give me of your bark, O Birch-tree;
Of your yellow bark, O Birch-tree!
Growing by the rushing river,
Tall and stately in the valley!
I a light canoe will build me. . . .
That shall float upon the river,
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn,
Like a yellow water-lily!
From "Hiawatha," by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

The meter of the first of the above selections lacks the unaccented syllable of the last foot of the line and is consequently said to be *catalectic.* Since poems of the first type are, however, more frequent than poems of the latter,

the full trochaic line is often distinguished from the shorter by the term *acatalectic.*

Although there is no great fundamental difference between the iambic and the trochaic meters, the two are, except for substituted feet, usually not employed in the same poem. Well-known poems in which these meters are combined include, however, Milton's "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso." The former has a far larger number of trochaic lines. In fact, if the trochaic meter can be said to have preëmpted any one field, it is that of lively emphatic presentment of a subject. The stress on the initial syllables is likely to induce an animated reading of the poem. In the following passage from William Blake's "The Tiger" the first three lines are trochaic while the last is iambic:

> Tiger, tiger, burning bright
> In the forests of the night,
> What immortal hand or eye
> Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

The blending of the two duple meters is nowhere better shown than in Scott's

HUNTING SONG

> Waken, lords and ladies gay,
> On the mountain dawns the day,
> All the jolly chase is here,
> With hawk and horse and hunting-spear!
> Hounds are in their couples yelling,
> Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
> Merrily, merrily, mingle they,
> "Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
The mist has left the mountain gray,
Springlets in the dawn are steaming,
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming:
And foresters have busy been
To track the buck in thicket green;
Now we come to chant our lay,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
To the green-wood haste away;
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot and tall of size;
We can show the marks he made,
When 'gainst the oak his antlers frayed;
You shall see him brought to bay,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay!
Tell them youth and mirth and glee
Run a course as well as we;
Time, stern huntsman, who can balk,
Stanch as hound and fleet as hawk?
Think of this and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay.

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832)

A similar call to a more serious purpose is voiced in vigorous trochaic verse in Alfred Edward Housman's "Reveille," from which we quote two stanzas:

Up, lad, up, 'tis late for lying:
  Hear the drums of morning play;
Hark, the empty highways crying
  "Who'll beyond the hills away? . . .

Clay lies still, but blood's a rover;
Breath's a ware that will not keep.
Up, lad; when the journey's over
There'll be time enough to sleep.

Purely trochaic is William Blake's

SONGS OF INNOCENCE: INTRODUCTION

Piping down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he laughing said to me:

"Pipe a song about a Lamb!"
So I piped with merry cheer.
"Piper, pipe that song again";
So I piped: he wept to hear.

"Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!"
So I sung the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

"Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book, that all may read."
So he vanished from my sight;
And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
And I stained the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

William Blake (*1757-1827*)

The reader should, perhaps, here be cautioned to remember that mere metrical regularity does not produce

a great poem. The irregularities found in English poetry contribute toward the marvelous musical range which is one of its chief glories. When poets vary from the metrical norm of a poem, their variations are, however, usually subtle. The same number of accented syllables in successive lines, irrespective of the number and position of the unaccented syllables, affords a crude sort of rhythm. Such work is found in the verse themes of college freshmen, in rude ballads, and in the obituary columns of country newspapers; it is found in no great or careful poetry. On the other hand, poetry suffers rather than gains from too regular a pattern. An easy metrical fluency can with practice be acquired by almost any educated person. Swinburne and Poe, well-nigh faultless in technique, are the easiest poets to parody or imitate. The monotonous recurrence of stress and the unvaried rimes of Pope's heroic couplets make his lines seem monotonous and plodding to the modern ear.

The lines thus far quoted have not, it will have been observed, the same number of feet. In "She Walks in Beauty" each line has four feet; in "Bonnie Doon" lines of four feet alternate with lines of three; and other line lengths will be found elsewhere in the chapter. For convenience in discussing the length of lines, the following terminology is employed. A line consisting of a single foot is called a *monometer;* a line of two feet, a *dimeter;* three, *trimeter;* four, *tetrameter;* five, *pentameter;* six, *hexameter;* seven, *heptameter;* eight, *octameter;* nine, *nonameter.* Lines of eight and seven feet can, in fact, often be resolved into two shorter lines. Herrick's poem "Upon his Departure Hence"—

Thus I
Pass by
And die
As one
Unknown
And gone—

consists of six lines of iambic monometer. A nonameter poem, Tennyson's "To Vergil," is quoted below. Needless to say these extremes are rare. The great bulk of English poetry is written in lines of three, four, five, or six feet, lines of four and five feet occurring most frequently. In this connection it should be emphasized that the number of feet in a line is determined not by the number of syllables, but by the number of accented syllables. For instance, the seven-syllable line scanned *ax* | *ax* | *ax* | *a* contains four feet, while the nine-syllable line *xxa*|*xxa*| *xxa* | *x* contains but three.

Poems, especially lyric poems, are usually divided into stanzas, metrical units each of which has the same pattern with regard to the number of the lines, the length of the lines, and the rime. Stanzas are metrical units and often, though not necessarily, thought units.

In describing the structure of stanzas, critics sometimes employ certain formulas making for brevity. Letters of the alphabet are used to indicate the rime arrangement, the stanza from "Bonnie Doon" being, for instance, said to rime *abcb*. A number prefixed to the symbol (*xa*, etc.) for a foot indicates the number of feet to the line; an iambic tetrameter, for example, is described as *4xa*. If this symbol is placed in parentheses, a figure outside indicates the number of lines to the stanza. The stanza

of "She Walks in Beauty" can thus be briefly described by the formula *6(4xa)*, riming *ababab*. If a stanza is complicated in structure, nothing is gained by these symbols, which are chiefly valuable as a means of concise description.

The majority of stanzas have no name, and new combinations of lines and rimes may be invented by a poet as they seem needed. A few stanzas are, however, sufficiently well known to be named. The stanza quoted from "Bonnie Doon" is termed the *ballad stanza*, because ancient English folk poetry was often cast in that form. In hymnals this stanza is designated by the term *common meter (C.M.)* The rime may be *abcb* or *abab*. Other stanzas bearing descriptive names, or the names of great authors who have popularized them, will be noted as they are exemplified in the selections.

Certain other questions of interest to the student of verse can be better understood after a careful reading of the following poem. Swinburne was one of the great master melodists of the English tongue. If he had had a thought-content worthy of his form, it would be hard to ascribe to him any save the highest place in Victorian poetry. He was a poet of sensuous beauty, of ancient Greece, of Republican patriotism, of child life, and of stormy and desolate nature. "The Garden of Proserpine" —as typical as it is superb—gives a pagan view of death; but, as in much that this author wrote, the splendid rhythm and melody lull one into forgetfulness of the subject. This poem should be compared with the author's sonorous, anapestic "Hymn to Proserpine."

THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE

Here, where the world is quiet;
  Here, where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
  In doubtful dream of dreams;
I watch the green field growing
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest-time and mowing,
  A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
  And men that laugh and weep;
Of what may come hereafter
  For men that sow to reap:
I am weary of days and hours,
Blown buds of barren flowers,
Desires and dreams and powers,
  And everything but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbour,
  And far from eye or ear
Wan waves and wet winds labour,
  Weak ships and spirits steer;
They drive adrift, and whither
They wot not who make thither;
But no such winds blow hither,
  And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice,
  No heather-flower or vine,
But bloomless buds of poppies,
  Green grapes of Proserpine,
Pale beds of blowing rushes,
Where no leaf blooms or blushes,
Save this whereout she crushes
  For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
In fruitless fields of corn,
They bow themselves and slumber
All night till light is born;
And like a soul belated,
In hell and heaven unmated,
By cloud and mist abated
Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,
He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
Nor weep for pains in hell;
Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes;
And well though love reposes,
In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
With cold immortal hands;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than love's who fears to greet her
To men that mix and meet her
From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
She waits for all men born;
Forgets the earth her mother,
The life of fruits and corn;
And spring and seed and swallow
Take wing for her and follow
Where summer song rings hollow
And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,
  The old loves with wearier wings;
And all dead years draw thither,
  And all disastrous things;
Dead dreams of days forsaken,
Blind buds that snows have shaken,
Wild leaves that winds have taken,
  Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,
  And joy was never sure;
To-day will die to-morrow;
  Time stoops to no man's lure;
And love, grown faint and fretful,
With lips but half regretful
Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
  Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
  From hope and fear set free,
We thank with brief thanksgiving
  Whatever gods may be
That no life lives forever;
That dead men rise up never;
That even the weariest river
  Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,
  Nor any change of light:
Nor sound of waters shaken,
  Nor any sound or sight:
Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
Nor days nor things diurnal;
Only the sleep eternal
  In an eternal night.

Algernon Charles Swinburne (*1837-1909*)

The careful reader has noticed the system of rime which binds the lines of the above poem into groups of eight, riming *ababcccb*. The *b*-rimes, like the rimes previously considered, involve but one syllable, while the *a*- and the *c*-rimes involve two. For the sake of a convenient terminology, rimes involving one syllable are called *masculine;* those involving two or three, *feminine*. Equally useful, but somewhat less frequently employed, terms are *single*, *double*, and *triple*. An approximate rime, like that of *river* and *never* in the next to the last stanza is tolerated occasionally by custom in cases where suitable riming words are not easily found. The unaccented syllable at the end of a feminine rime-word in an ascending meter is, as has been stated, not considered a foot. The lines

x a | x a | x a | x
For reaping folk and sowing

and

x a | x a | x a
A sleepy world of streams

are both iambic trimeters. Lines of ascending meter possessing this extra final syllable are termed *hypercatalectic*.

The first line of the second stanza of the above poem should be marked

x x a | x a | x a | x
I am tired of tears and laughter.

The anapest is sometimes found as a substitute for the iambus, especially, as here, in the first foot of a line.

The poetic device *alliteration*, the use of a succession

of words with the same initial consonant, is nowhere better illustrated than in stanzas like the one beginning

*P*ale, beyond *p*orch and *p*ortal.

Alliteration is usually confined to accented words, but Swinburne's fondness for the alliterative style led him to use it also in unaccented syllables:

*W*an *w*aves and *w*et *w*inds labour,
*W*eak ships. . . .

Alliteration is sometimes referred to as initial rime. This term should be used cautiously, for it is also applied to a type of rime, exceedingly rare, exhibited in this stanza from Alfred Noyes's "Astrid":

White-armed Astrid,—ah, but she was beautiful!——
*Night*ly wandered weeping thro' the ferns in the moon,
Slowly, weaving her strange garland in the forest,
Crowned with white violets,
Gowned in green.
Holy was that glen where she glided,
Making her wild garland as Merlin had bidden her,
Breaking off the milk-white horns of the honey-suckle,
*Sweet*ly dripped the dew upon her small white
Feet.

Often associated with the term *alliteration* is the term *assonance,* which is used to describe one type of imperfect approximate rime. The vowel sound must be the same, but the concluding consonants are different, as in *gnome-bold* or *beaux-roll.* Rimes of this type were seen in early modern English poetry, are found in Spanish, but in recent English poetry are usually a sign of slovenly workmanship. George Eliot, William Butler Yeats, and a

few others have, however, used assonance with some effect. The repetition of the same vowel sound in other than end words is also occasionally called assonance:

> . . . of dr*ea*ms;
> I watch the gr*ee*n f*ie*ld growing
> For r*ea*ping folk and sowing. . . .

The skilful use of the sounds of speech results in a quality of poetry known as *tone-color* or *melody*. The basis of melody is to be sought principally in the markedly different pitch of the various vowels. In producing the sound *ee*, for instance, the vocal cords vibrate many times more rapidly than in pronouncing the sound *uh*. Consciously and unconsciously, poets avail themselves of this principle to produce subtle yet remarkable effects. Consonants, too, play a part in melody. The liquids *l*, *m*, *n*, *ng*, and *r* join with the vowels to create the matchless word-music of "The Garden of Proserpine." With both consonants and vowels the possibilities are almost limitless.

Wordsworth did more than any other individual to democratize English poetry. In his famous preface to the second edition (1800) of *The Lyrical Ballads* he advocated the use of "the real language of men." For his poetry he chose subjects from humble life and interpreted them in terms of the loftiest thought. "The Solitary Reaper" is one of several "Memorials of a Tour in Scotland"—a tour which Wordsworth made in company with his sister Dorothy. The poem is rendered immortal by its vivid pictorial quality, its haunting melody, and its suggestive power. It is structurally perfect, each

stanza being a complete unit in the development of the thought.

THE SOLITARY REAPER

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?—
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago:
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;—

I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

The last stanza of "The Solitary Reaper" expresses, with especial reference to things heard, the chief value of experience. "I Wandered Lonely" bears witness to a similar benefit and delight derivable from things seen. What would be the value of a visit to the Grand Canyon, of spending an hour in Westminster Abbey, or of witnessing a performance of *Hamlet*, if no mental impression were carried forward into the rest of life? Culture is—in part, at least—the result of a number of such impressions.

Herrick's "To Daffodils," Wordsworth's "I Wandered Lonely," and Austin Dobson's "To Daffodils" are an interesting trio of poems. Herrick sees only the frail duration of the daffodil to which he compares human life. For Wordsworth the daffodils afford a dual pleasure: the joy of beholding, the satisfaction of philosophizing remembrance. Dobson, consciously sophisticated, refers not only to the daffodils, but to his poet predecessors who drew inspiration from them. In reading these poems it is perhaps stimulating to bear in mind the possibility that the greatest poem on the theme is yet unwritten. Wordsworth owed an immeasurable debt to his wife and to his sister Dorothy. Mrs. Wordsworth composed the third and fourth lines of the last stanza of "I Wandered Lonely." We quote the account from Dorothy's journal of the incident which inspired the poem:

"We saw a few daffodils close to the water-side. But as we went along there were more and yet more; and at last, under the boughs of the trees, we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore. They grew among the mossy stones, about and about them; some rested their heads upon these stones, as a pillow, for weariness; and the rest tossed and reeled and danced, and seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind that blew upon them over the lake . . . they looked so gay, ever glancing, ever changing."

I WANDERED LONELY

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A Poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;

And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.
William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

In its treatment of the flower, the above poem is essentially modern, as are, for instance, Bryant's "To the Fringed Gentian" and Emerson's "The Rhodora." From the latter we quote:

Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing,
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being.

With "I Wandered Lonely" let us compare Waller's "Go, Lovely Rose," a poem which exhibits a pre-Wordsworthian interpretation of floral loveliness. Two widely known American poems of this type are "The Wild Honeysuckle" by the Revolutionary poet Philip Freneau, and "My Life Is Like the Summer Rose," by another politician poet, Richard Henry Wilde. Herrick's "To Daffodils" has already been mentioned. The last two lines of the poem below may be seen at Charlottesville, Virginia, engraved on the tomb of a Miss Maude Woods, who won a prize for beauty at the Pan-American Exposition (Buffalo, 1901) and died within a year.

GO, LOVELY ROSE!

Go, lovely Rose!
Tell her, that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung
In deserts, where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired:
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die! that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee:
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair!

Edmund Waller (*1606-1687*)

In the following poem the author has received his impression not from a singer, not from a flower or a bed of flowers, but from a bird outlined in flight against the sunset. Bryant's poetry was largely the product of his youth. In later life he was editor of the New York *Evening Post* and for a while before his death was commonly regarded as America's "first citizen."

TO A WATER-FOWL

Whither, midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly seen against the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean side?

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast—
The desert and illimitable air—
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend,
Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.

William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878)

The conclusion of "To a Waterfowl" expresses a moral much more obviously than Wordsworth did in either of the poems just quoted. In fact, ending a poem with a moral is characteristic not only of Bryant but of most of his fellows in the early nineteenth century group of New England poets. Witness the conclusions of two other great compositions:

So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

From "Thanatopsis," by William Cullen Bryant

To a description of a tinted shell is applied the following moral, marred by an unfortunate phrase, "shut thee from heaven":

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

From "The Chambered Nautilus," by Oliver Wendell Holmes

The poem below, now often heard as a song, is a noble expression of the indomitable quality of the human will. Henley, friend of Stevenson, literary critic, and master

of light verse, lay on a sick bed when he wrote it. *Invictus* means unconquered.

INVICTUS

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

William Ernest Henley (*1849-1903*)

Though sharing with Spenser, Keats, Shelley, and Swinburne the distinction of being a poet for poets, Matthew Arnold is admired less for his metrical subtlety than for his intellectual quality. The following poem, perhaps an echo from Goethe, succinctly reflects its author's philosophy of life.

DESTINY

Why each is striving, from of old,
To love more deeply than he can?
Still would be true, yet still grows cold?
—Ask of the Powers that sport with man!

They yoked in him, for endless strife,
A heart of ice, a soul of fire;
And hurl'd him on the Field of Life,
An aimless unallay'd Desire.

Matthew Arnold (*1822-1888*)

Whereas Arnold thinks almost wholly in terms of the individual, Kipling thinks in terms of the English race—triumphant, beneficent, conscious of its mission. The title of "The White Man's Burden" has become a current phrase in the language.

THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN

Take up the White Man's burden—
  Send forth the best ye breed—
Go bind your sons to exile
  To serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness,
  On fluttered folk and wild—
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
  Half-devil and half-child.

Take up the White Man's Burden—
  In patience to abide,
To veil the threat of terror
  And check the show of pride;
By open speech and simple,
  An hundred times made plain,
To seek another's profit,
  And work another's gain.

Take up the White Man's burden—
  The savage wars of peace—
Fill full the mouth of Famine
  And bid the sickness cease;
And when your goal is nearest
  The end for others sought,
Watch Sloth and heathen Folly
  Bring all your hope to nought.

Take up the White Man's burden—
  No tawdry rule of kings,
But toil of serf and sweeper—
  The tale of common things.
The ports ye shall not enter,
  The roads ye shall not tread,
Go make them with your living,
  And mark them with your dead.

Take up the White Man's burden—
  And reap his old reward:
The blame of those ye better,
  The hate of those ye guard—
The cry of hosts ye humour
  (Ah, slowly!) toward the light:—
"Why brought ye us from bondage,
  "Our loved Egyptian night?"

Take up the White Man's burden—
  Ye dare not stoop to less—
Nor call too loud on Freedom
  To cloak your weariness;
By all ye cry or whisper,
  By all ye leave or do,
The silent, sullen peoples
  Shall weigh your Gods and you.

Take up the White Man's burden—
  Have done with childish days—
The lightly proffered laurel,
  The easy, ungrudged praise.
Comes now, to search your manhood
  Through all the thankless years,
Cold, edged with dear-bought wisdom,
  The judgment of your peers!

Rudyard Kipling (1865-)

The following poem was written before Kipling was born; but it has as its subject an individual who bore the "white man's burden." Poems of this type are said to be *occasional*—that is, inspired by or written for a particular incident or occasion. The author of "The Private of the Buffs" was Matthew Arnold's successor as Professor of Poetry at Oxford. The Buffs was a Kentish regiment; Lord Elgin, an Englishman prominent in Anglo-Chinese affairs about 1860.

THE PRIVATE OF THE BUFFS

Some Sikhs and a private of the Buffs, having remained behind with the grog carts, fell into the hands of the Chinese. On the next morning they were brought before the authorities, and commanded to perform the *Kotow*. The Sikhs obeyed; but Moyse, the English soldier, declaring that he would not prostrate himself before any Chinaman alive, was immediately knocked upon the head, and his body thrown on a dunghill.—*The Times.*

Last night, among his fellow roughs,
  He jested, quaffed, and swore,
A drunken private of the Buffs,
  Who never looked before.

To-day, beneath the foeman's frown,
He stands in Elgin's place,
Ambassador from Britain's crown,
And type of all her race.

Poor, reckless, rude, low-born, untaught,
Bewildered, and alone,
A heart, with English instinct fraught,
He yet can call his own.
Aye, tear his body limb from limb,
Bring cord, or ax, or flame:
He only knows, that not through *him*
Shall England come to shame.

Far Kentish hop-fields round him seem'd,
Like dreams, to come and go;
Bright leagues of cherry-blossom gleamed,
One sheet of living snow;
The smoke, above his father's door,
In grey soft eddyings hung:
Must he then watch it rise no more,
Doom'd by himself so young?

Yes, honour calls!—with strength like steel
He put the vision by.
Let dusky Indians whine and kneel;
An English lad must die.
And thus, with eyes that would not shrink,
With knee to man unbent,
Unfaltering on its dreadful brink,
To his red grave he went.

Vain, mightiest fleets of iron framed;
Vain, those all-shattering guns;
Unless proud England keep, untamed,
The strong heart of her sons.

So, let his name through Europe ring—
A man of mean estate,
Who died, as firm as Sparta's King,
Because his soul was great.
Sir Francis Hastings Charles Doyle (1810-1888).

From the foregoing objective treatment of honor, we turn to a subjective view of the sister virtue—duty. The term ode, as used here in the loosest of its three meanings, implies a serious reflective poem of considerable length.

ODE TO DUTY

Stern Daughter of the Voice of God!
O Duty! if that name thou love
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove;
Thou, who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations dost set free;
And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them; who, in love and truth,
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth:
Glad Hearts! without reproach or blot
Who do thy work, and know it not:
O! if through confidence misplaced
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power! around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright,
And happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.

And they a blissful course may hold
Even now, who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed;
Yet seek thy firm support, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried;
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust:
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred
The task, in smoother walks to stray;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control;
But in the quietness of thought:
Me this unchartered freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance-desires:
My hopes no more must change their name,
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face:
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;
And the most ancient heavens, through Thee,
are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!
I call thee: I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour;
Oh, let my weakness have an end!

Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice;
The confidence of reason give;
And in the light of Truth thy Bondman let me live!
William Wordsworth (*1770-1850*)

The second and fourth lines of the first of the above stanzas do not rime in pronunciation. Ending each in *-ove*, however, the words on the page appear to rime. This type of rime, found occasionally in the work of some of the greatest poets, is called *eye-rime*. On the contrary, the second and fourth lines of the second stanza rime in pronunciation, although they are not spelled alike. Such rime, though wholly satisfactory, is called *ear-rime* to distinguish it from rime such as *God-rod* in which both sound and spelling are identical. *Free* and *humanity* represent a type of approximate rime. In Elizabethan as well as in some later poems this final *y* is to be considered as riming with *try*.

Compare the two foregoing poems with the following. Note that a similar theme—devotion to duty—is brought out almost equally well by a narrated incident, a bit of reasoned philosophy, or the lyric cry of a lover. In "To Lucasta" note the rime *nunnery-fly*. It was typical of the seventeenth century to address a lady by a Latin name. Lovelace is remembered with Suckling and Carew as a Cavalier poet.

TO LUCASTA, ON GOING TO THE WARS

Tell me not, Sweet, I am unkind
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore;
I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
Loved I not Honour more.

Colonel Richard Lovelace (1618-1658)

It is perhaps a platitude that one admires—secretly, at least—a quality one lacks. Burns, a creature of impulse, in writing the epitaph of a brother worker, gave highest praise to self-control. The stanza of "A Bard's Epitaph," found also in such well-known poems as "To a Mouse" and "To a Mountain Daisy," has been given Burns's name. Note in this poem the change from dialect to standard English. *Owre* means over; *blate*, timid; *snool*, yield weakly; *dool*, sorrow.

A BARD'S EPITAPH

Is there a whim-inspirèd fool,
Owre fast for thought, owre hot for rule,
Owre blate to seek, owre proud to snool?
Let him draw near;
And owre this grassy heap sing dool,
And drap a tear.

Is there a bard of rustic song,
Who, noteless, steals the crowds among,
That weekly this area throng?
Oh, pass not by!
But, with a frater-feeling strong,
Here, heave a sigh.

Is there a man, whose judgment clear
Can others teach the course to steer,
Yet runs, himself, life's mad career
Wild as the wave?
Here pause—and thro' the starting tear,
Survey this grave.

The poor inhabitant below
Was quick to learn, and wise to know,
And keenly felt the friendly glow,
And softer flame;
But thoughtless follies laid him low,
And stain'd his name!

Reader, attend!—whether thy soul
Soars fancy's flights beyond the pole,
Or darkling grubs this earthy hole,
In low pursuit;
Know, prudent, cautious self-control
Is wisdom's root.

Robert Burns (*1759-1796*)

Poems charged with homely sentiment are, like songs and narrative verse, enjoyed by persons uninitiated into the subtleties of the unsung lyric. Kingsley is, of course, best known not as a poet but as the author of the novels *Westward Ho!* and *Hereward the Wake*. Note the feminine rimes in "Young and Old." Were the words *lad* and *there* omitted, the sense would be equally clear, but the poem would somehow lose its slow tempo and pathetic dignity.

YOUNG AND OLD

When all the world is young, lad,
And all the trees are green;
And every goose a swan, lad,
And every lass a queen;

Then hey for boot and horse, lad,
And round the world away;
Young blood must have its course, lad,
And every dog his day.

When all the world is old, lad,
And all the trees are brown;
And all the sport is stale, lad,
And all the wheels run down;
Creep home, and take your place there,
The spent and maimed among:
God grant you find one face there,
You loved when all was young.

Charles Kingsley (*1819-1875*)

In the above poem the second stanza affords a contrast with the first. In the following, the second answers a question which the first has propounded. Goldsmith, a member of Dr. Johnson's Club, was the versatile author of *She Stoops to Conquer*, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, *The Deserted Village*, and *The Citizen of the World*. A brilliant parody of "When Lovely Woman" may be found in the chapter on Light Verse.

WHEN LOVELY WOMAN

When lovely woman stoops to folly
And finds too late that men betray,—
What charm can soothe her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover
And wring his bosom, is—to die.

Oliver Goldsmith (*1728-1774*)

The art, the mythology, and the mystery of the ancient world have always been popular subjects with English poets. The Niobe of Greek mythology, who lost her six sons and six daughters and would not be comforted, has, for instance, become a type of the bereaved mother of all times and lands. For Byron's cultivated audience a hundred words could not have described Rome so well as the phrase "the Niobe of nations." In "Niobe," as in "Orpheus and Eurydice," and "The Venus of Milo," Noyes has attained a high rank among modern interpreters of the legends of Greek mythology. "Niobe" is, perhaps, the finest presentation in words of the legendary mother.

NIOBE

How like the sky she bends above her child,
  One with the great horizon of her pain!
No sob from our low seas where woe runs wild,
  No weeping cloud, no momentary rain,
Can mar the heaven-high visage of her grief,
  That frozen anguish, proud, majestic, dumb.
    She stoops in pity above the labouring earth,
      Knowing how fond, how brief
  Is all its hope, past, present, and to come,
    She stoops in pity, and yearns to assuage its dearth.

Through that fair face the whole dark universe
  Speaks, as a thorn-tree speaks thro' one white flower;
And all those wrenched Promethean souls that curse
  The gods, but cannot die before their hour,
Find utterance in her beauty. That fair head
  Bows over all earth's graves. It was her cry

Men heard in Rama when the twisted ways
With children's blood ran red!
Her silence utters all the sea would sigh;
And, in her face, the whole earth's anguish prays.

It is the pity, the pity of human love
That strains her face, upturned to meet the doom,
And her deep bosom, like a snow-white dove
Frozen upon its nest, ne'er to resume
Its happy breathing o'er the golden brace
Whose fostering was her death. Death, death alone
Can break the anguished horror of that spell!
The sorrow on her face
Is sealed: the living flesh is turned to stone;
She knows all, all, that Life and Time can tell

Ah, yet, her woman's love, so vast, so tender;
Her woman's body, hurt by every dart;
Braving the thunder, still, still hide the slender
Soft frightened child beneath her mighty heart.
She is all one mute immortal cry, one brief
Infinite pang of such victorious pain
That she transcends the heavens and bows them down!
The majesty of grief
Is hers, and her dominion must remain
Eternal. God nor man usurps that crown.

Alfred Noyes (*1880-*)

In this iambic poem, note the substitution of the lighter ascending foot in the last line of the first stanza. The fifth line may be similarly explained, or *heaven* may be considered as a monosyllable. These substitutions are fairly frequent in iambic poetry. Similarly the dactyl appears occasionally in a trochaic line. Much as the words *Promethean* and *Rama* may connote, it is evident

that they possess also a musical value. George Whitefield, it is said, could bring an audience to tears by his pronunciation of the word *Mesopotamia*. Poets likewise know the human ear and the capabilities of the language. In each of the following lists of female names, the very essence of the author's melody is accurately reflected:

> Faustine, Fragoletta, Dolores,
> Félise and Yolande and Juliette. . . .
> *From "Dedication," by Algernon Charles Swinburne*

> Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
> Margaret and Rosalys.
> *From "The Blessed Damosel," by Dante Gabriel Rossetti*

Milton is, of course, the classic example.

Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" is one of the supreme English masterpieces of subtle melody. The last two lines are often compared with the passage already quoted from Emerson's "The Rhodora" and with the opening lines of Keats's own *Endymion*,

> A thing of beauty is a joy forever.

Though almost purely lyric, the "Ode on a Grecian Urn" is far removed from the simplicity of the song; it relies not only upon rime and rhythm but upon sound-harmony or tone-color. To enjoy the poem fully, one must visualize the antique urn upon which some forgotten genius told his story not in words but in design. With reference to sight and sound, Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" and "Ode to a Nightingale" bear to each other a relation similar to that which exists between Wordsworth's "I Wandered Lonely" and "The Solitary Reaper."

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
  Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
  A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape
  Of deities or mortals, or of both,
    In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
  What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
    What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
  Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
  Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
  Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
    Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
  She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
    For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
  Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearièd,
  For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
  For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,
    For ever panting, and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
  That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
    A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

John Keats (*1795-1821*)

There is sometimes a close kinship between a poem and an example of some other art. The historic and fundamental relation between poetry and music has been discussed in the chapter on the Song. Though these sister arts have in the main followed divergent paths, they are still often associated. In the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, for instance, airs and lyrics are happily blended. The relation of poetry to sculpture has been suggested by Noyes's "Niobe," the conception of which seems to have been largely derived from the Uffizi statue. The figured

Grecian urn, supposedly a copy of an original by Scopas, comes a step nearer to painting; Keats, endowed with a high pictorial quality, is, in Browning's "Popularity," described as the one who fished up the murex, the shell-fish which yields royal purple. The picture quality of poetry reached its culmination in Rossetti, who, like Blake, was a painter as well as a poet and often expressed the same idea in each of the two arts. The Imagists of the twentieth century aim at painting pictures with words. Tennyson, a poetic heir of Keats, wrote many poems expressive of color and form. From "The Lady of Shalott," for instance, J. W. Waterhouse and George H. Boughton each drew the subject for a painting. Although Tennyson wrote "The Splendor Falls" "after hearing the echoes of Killarney in 1848," the poem is even more pictorial than suggestive of sounds.

THE SPLENDOR FALLS

The splendor falls on castle walls
  And snowy summits old in story;
The long light shakes across the lakes,
  And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
  And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
  The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.
Alfred, Lord Tennyson (*1809-1892*)

When a word within a line rimes with one at the end (*falls-walls*, line one, above) the rime is described as *internal*. The difference between internal rime and the normal *end* rime is slight, the latter being, of course, somewhat more emphatic. Note that the refrain of the above stanzas differs markedly from the regular iambic tetrameters of the first four lines. In the refrain the call of a bugle is imitated in words. This adaptation of sound to sense, common in poetry, is called *onomatopœia*. The adjective is *onomatopœic* or *onomatopoetic*.

Although the quatrain of iambic tetrameters riming *abba* had been used previously, it remained for Tennyson to give the meter a great poem. *In Memoriam* has since given the name to the stanza in which it is written. The following passage is often sung as a Christmas carol.

RING OUT, WILD BELLS

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:

The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (*1809-1892*)

In the preceding hymn Tennyson expressed a general appeal for better conditions. In the following poem the

newly appointed laureate complimented the great sovereign who was regarded by her contemporaries as the epitome of an age of morality and idealism. A dedication in verse is difficult. Swinburne's self-dedication in his *Poems and Ballads, First Series,* displays high metrical skill. Whittier's "Proem," Morris's "An Apology," and Masefield's "A Consecration" ably characterize the aims of their respective authors. Happily phrased is William Watson's sonnet offering a volume "To Lord Tennyson." It is safe to say, however, that no dedication has surpassed in felicity the subjoined poem. The reference in the second stanza is to William Wordsworth, who preceded Tennyson as poet laureate.

TO THE QUEEN

Revered, beloved—O you that hold
  A nobler office upon earth
  Than arms, or power of brain, or birth
Could give the warrior kings of old,

Victoria,—since your Royal grace
  To one of less desert allows
  This laurel greener from the brows
Of him that utter'd nothing base;

And should your greatness, and the care
  That yokes with empire, yield you time
  To make demand of modern rhyme
If aught of ancient worth be there;

Then—while a sweeter music wakes,
  And thro' wild March the throstle calls,

Where all about your palace-walls
The sun-lit almond-blossom shakes—

Take, Madam, this poor book of song;
For tho' the faults were thick as dust
In vacant chambers, I could trust
Your kindness. May you rule us long,

And leave us rulers of your blood
As noble till the latest day!
May children of our children say,
"She wrought her people lasting good;

"Her court was pure; her life serene;
God gave her peace; her land reposed;
A thousand claims to reverence closed
In her as Mother, Wife, and Queen;

"And statesmen at her council met
Who knew the seasons when to take
Occasion by the hand, and make
The bounds of freedom wider yet

"By shaping some august decree
Which kept her throne unshaken still,
Broad-based upon her people's will,
And compass'd by the inviolate sea!"

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (*1809-1892*)

As Tennyson lay on his death-bed, Henry van Dyke, author, clergyman, professor, and later ambassador to Holland and Luxemburg, penned the following poem, felicitous in its reference to "Crossing the Bar," and carrying in the fourth and fifth lines the noblest conceivable tribute. The trochaic octame-

ter lines harmonize well with the tone of stately dignity.

TENNYSON

In Lucem Transitus, October, 1892

From the misty shores of midnight, touched with splendors of the moon,
To the singing tides of heaven, and the light more clear than noon,
Passed a soul that grew to music till it was with God in tune.

Brother of the greatest poets, true to nature, true to art;
Lover of Immortal Love, uplifter of the human heart,—
Who shall cheer us with high music, who shall sing, if thou depart?

Silence here—for love is silent, gazing on the lessening sail;
Silence here—for grief is voiceless when the mighty minstrels fail;
Silence here—but, far beyond us, many voices crying, Hail!

Henry van Dyke (1852-)

Tennyson was buried in London, in the "Poets' Corner" of Westminster Abbey. That venerable Gothic building contains many more immortals now than when Beaumont wrote his poem, and among those recently buried therein are a number of men of letters. Speaking for a British colony, Kipling well terms Westminster "The Abbey that makes us we." Beaumont's name is almost inseparably connected with that of John Fletcher—the two constitute the most famous pair of collaborators in English literature.

ON THE TOMBS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Mortality, behold and fear,
What a change of flesh is here!
Think how many royal bones
Sleep within these heaps of stones;
Here they lie, had realms and lands,
Who now want strength to stir their hands,
Where from their pulpits seal'd with dust
They preach, "In greatness is no trust."
Here's an acre sown indeed
With the richest royallest seed
That the earth did e'er suck in
Since the first man died for sin:
Here the bones of birth have cried
"Though gods they were, as men they died!"
Here are sands, ignoble things,
Dropt from the ruin'd sides of kings:
Here's a world of pomp and state
Buried in dust, once dead by fate.

Francis Beaumont (*1584-1616*)

Tennyson strove in *The Idylls of the King* to do for the obscure dawn of his country what Vergil had done for Rome. His selection by the Mantuans as the nineteenth centenary poet was, in consequence, most happy, and his response justified the choice. This excellent occasional poem is written in trochaic nonameter catalectic, a very unusual form.

TO VIRGIL

(WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF THE MANTUANS FOR THE NINETEENTH CENTENARY OF VIRGIL'S DEATH)

Roman Virgil, thou that singest Ilion's lofty temples robed in fire,

Ilion falling, Rome arising, wars, and filial faith, and Dido's pyre;

Landscape-lover, lord of language, more than he that sang the "Works and Days,"
All the chosen coin of fancy flashing out from many a golden phrase;

Thou that singest wheat and woodland, tilth and vineyard, hive and horse and herd;
All the charm of all the Muses often flowering in a lonely word;

Poet of the happy Tityrus piping underneath his beechen bowers;
Poet of the poet-satyr whom the laughing shepherd bound with flowers;

Chanter of the Pollio, glorying in the blissful years again to be,
Summers of the snakeless meadow, unlaborious earth and oarless sea;

Thou that seest Universal Nature moved by Universal Mind;
Thou majestic in thy sadness at the doubtful doom of human kind;

Light among the vanish'd ages; star that gildest yet this phantom shore;
Golden branch amid the shadows, kings and realms that pass to rise no more;

Now thy Forum roars no longer, fallen every purple Cæsar's dome—
Tho' thine ocean-roll of rhythm sound forever of Imperial Rome—

Now the Rome of slaves hath perish'd, and the Rome of
freemen holds her place,
I, from out the Northern Island sunder'd once from all the
human race,

I salute thee, Mantovano, I that loved thee since my day
began,
Wielder of the stateliest measure ever moulded by the lips
of man.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (*1809-1892*)

The next three poems are alike in their reflection of the spirit of America, and alike in the use of iambic tetrameter—a line as characteristic of the English lyric as iambic pentameter is of longer poems. An excellent composition may be very short. "The Ballot" is by a nearly forgotten poet of the early national period of American literature and history.

THE BALLOT

A weapon that comes down as still
As snowflakes fall upon the sod;
But executes a freeman's will,
As lightning does the will of God.

John Pierpont (*1785-1866*)

"Westward Ho!" commemorates an epic phase of American civilization, a phase neglected by the New England poets. Its author was a native Westerner whose name is often associated with that of Bret Harte.

WESTWARD HO!

What strength! what strife! what rude unrest!
What shocks! what half-shaped armies met!
A mighty nation moving west,
With all its steely sinews set
Against the living forests. Hear
The shouts, the shots of pioneer,
The rended forests, rolling wheels,
As if some half-check'd army reels,
Recoils, redoubles, comes again,
Loud sounding like a hurricane.

O bearded, stalwart, westmost men,
So tower-like, so Gothic built!
A kingdom won without the guilt
Of studied battle, that hath been
Your blood's inheritance . . . Your heirs
Know not your tombs: the great plowshares
Cleave softly through the mellow loam
Where you have made eternal home,
And set no sign. Your epitaphs
Are writ in furrows. Beauty laughs
While through the green ways wandering
Beside her love, slow gathering
White, starry-hearted May-time blooms
Above your lowly leveled tombs;
And then below the spotted sky
She stops, she leans, she wonders why
The ground is heaved and broken so,
And why the grasses darker grow
And droop and trail like wounded wing.

Yea, Time, the grand old harvester,
Has gather'd you from wood and plain.
We call to you again, again;

The rush and rumble of the car
Comes back in answer. Deep and wide
The wheels of progress have passed on;
The silent pioneer is gone.
His ghost is moving down the trees,
And now we push the memories
Of bluff, bold men who dared and died
In foremost battle, quite aside.

Cincinnatus Heine ("Joaquin") Miller (1841-1913)

Though less imaginative than "Westward Ho!", "Unmanifest Destiny" is more vigorous, and its phrasing harmonizes more effectively with its metrical structure. Hovey—poet, translator, collaborator with Bliss Carman—belongs with Miller, Aldrich, Cawein, and a few others in a rather distinguished group of American poets whose careers fell in the fallow period about the close of the last century.

UNMANIFEST DESTINY

To what new fates, my country, far
  And unforeseen of foe or friend,
Beneath what unexpected star,
  Compelled to what unchosen end,

Across the sea that knows no beach
  The Admiral of Nations guides
Thy blind obedient keels to reach
  The harbor where thy future rides!

The guns that spoke at Lexington
  Knew not that God was planning then
The trumpet word of Jefferson
  To bugle forth the rights of men.

To them that wept and cursed Bull Run,
What was it but despair and shame?
Who saw behind the cloud and sun?
Who knew that God was in the flame?

Had not defeat upon defeat,
Disaster on disaster come,
The slave's emancipated feet
Had never marched behind the drum.

There is a Hand that bends our deeds
To mightier issues than we planned;
Each son that triumphs, each that bleeds,
My country, serves Its dark command.

I do not know beneath what sky
Nor on what seas shall be thy fate;
I only know it shall be high,
I only know it shall be great.

Richard Hovey (*1864-1900*)

During the World War a pamphlet by Kipling entitled *Twenty Poems* had an enormous sale in England. The timely "For All We Have and Are" sounded a clarion call to what was, for England, a modern crusade. Kipling is said to have been the first to apply the epithet Hun to the German. "For All We Have and Are," although not intended for singing, has a chorus—a characteristic of many of its author's poems.

FOR ALL WE HAVE AND ARE

1914

For all we have and are,
For all our children's fate,
Stand up and take the war.
The Hun is at the gate!

Our world has passed away
In wantonness o'erthrown.
There is nothing left to-day
But steel and fire and stone!
Though all we knew depart,
The old Commandments stand:—
"In courage keep your heart,
In strength lift up your hand."

Once more we hear the word
That sickened earth of old:—
"No law except the Sword
Unsheathed and uncontrolled."
Once more it knits mankind,
Once more the nations go
To meet and break and bind
A crazed and driven foe.

Comfort, content, delight,
The age's slow-bought gain,
They shrivelled in a night.
Only ourselves remain
To face the naked days
In silent fortitude,
Through perils and dismays
Renewed and re-renewed.
Though all we made depart
The old Commandments stand:—
"In patience keep your heart
In strength lift up your hand."

No easy hope or lies
Shall bring us to our goal,
But iron sacrifice
Of body, will, and soul.

There is but one task for all—
One life for each to give.
What stands if Freedom fall?
Who dies if England live?

Rudyard Kipling (1865-)

Whereas Kipling's poem grew directly from a time of national crisis, Burns's patriotic challenge was written centuries after the event which it commemorates. At Bannockburn the Scots under Robert Bruce routed the invading army of Edward II. The heroic deeds of Sir William Wallace antedated those of Bruce by a score of years. This entire poem is made a unit by the riming of the fourth lines of the stanzas.

BRUCE'S ADDRESS TO HIS ARMY AT BANNOCKBURN

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led;
Welcome to your gory bed,
  Or to Victorie!

Now's the day, and now's the hour;
See the front o' battle lour;
See approach proud Edward's pow'r—
  Chains and slaverie!

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
  Let him turn and flee!

Wha for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Free-man stand, or Free-man fa'?
  Let him follow me!

By Oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free!

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!—
Let us do or die!

Robert Burns (*1759-1796*)

The next two poems reflect different phases of the same struggle and afford two glimpses of the same place, Charleston, S. C. The first poem, vigorous and graphic, gives the impressions of a British sailor who made the port on a blockade runner in the last days of the Confederacy. The second is one of the world's finest tributes, at once sweet and elevated, to the heroic dead. Compare also the meters. That of "Romance" is a stanzaic arrangement of the rimeless trochaic tetrameter popularized by Longfellow's *Hiawatha*.

ROMANCE

"Talk of pluck!" pursued the Sailor,
Set at euchre on his elbow,
"I was on the wharf at Charleston,
Just ashore from off the runner.

"It was gray and dirty weather,
And I heard a drum go rolling,
Rub-a-dubbing in the distance,
Awful dour-like and defiant.

"In and out among the cotton,
Mud, and chains, and stores, and anchors,
Tramped a squad of battered scarecrows—
Poor old Dixie's bottom dollar!

"Some had shoes, but all had rifles,
Them that wasn't bald was beardless,
And the drum was rolling 'Dixie,'
And they stepped to it like men, sir!

"Rags and tatters, belts and bayonets,
On they swung, the drum a-rolling,
Mum and sour. It looked like fighting,
And they meant it too, by thunder!"

William Ernest Henley (*1849-1903*)

AT MAGNOLIA CEMETERY *

Sleep sweetly in your humble graves,
Sleep, martyrs of a fallen cause;
Though yet no marble column craves
The pilgrim here to pause.

In seeds of laurel in the earth
The blossom of your fame is blown,
And somewhere, waiting for its birth,
The shaft is in the stone!

Meanwhile, behalf the tardy years
Which keep in trust your storied tombs,
Behold! your sisters bring their tears,
And these memorial blooms.

* This selection from Timrod is reprinted from the Memorial Edition through the courtesy of the holder of the copyright, Johnson Publishing Company.

Small tributes! but your shades will smile
More proudly on these wreaths to-day,
Than when some cannon-moulded pile
Shall overlook this bay.

Stoop, angels, hither from the skies!
There is no holier spot of ground
Than where defeated valor lies,
By mourning beauty crowned.

Henry Timrod (*1829-1867*)

The next two poems afford an opportunity for comparing a Victorian and a modern poet on the same subject. Christina Rossetti shared the inheritance of a family of genius. "Song" is a lyric in the truest sense; the words almost sing themselves. Among living poets Sara Teasdale holds a high place for her shorter lyrics. Note the effect of the three different line-lengths in "I Shall Not Care."

SONG

When I am dead, my dearest,
Sing no sad songs for me;
Plant thou no roses at my head,
Nor shady cypress tree:
Be the green grass above me
With showers and dewdrops wet;
And if thou wilt, remember,
And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,
I shall not feel the rain;
I shall not hear the nightingale
Sing on, as if in pain;

And dreaming through the twilight
That doth not rise nor set,
Haply I may remember,
And haply may forget.

Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830-1894)

I SHALL NOT CARE

When I am dead and over me bright April
Shakes out her rain-drenched hair;
Though you should lean above me broken-hearted,
I shall not care.

I shall have peace, as leafy trees are peaceful
When rain bends down the bough;
And I shall be more silent and cold-hearted
Than you are now.

Sara Teasdale (1884-)

We quote another of Sara Teasdale's compact lyrics. "Wisdom" expresses in contemporary terms an ancient cynical thought.

WISDOM

When I have ceased to break my wings
Against the faultiness of things,
And learned that compromises wait
Behind each hardly opened gate,
When I can look life in the eyes,
Grown calm and very coldly wise,
Life will have given me the Truth
And taken in exchange—my youth.

Sara Teasdale (1884-)

The meter of the preceding selection demands special notice. The stanzaic unit, consisting of two riming lines of iambic tetrameter, is known as the *short* or *octosyllabic couplet*. This meter has been the vehicle of many long narrative poems from Chaucer's time to the present day. It is perhaps best known as the favorite meter of Sir Walter Scott. Variety is achieved by an occasional tercet and sometimes by a quatrain riming *abab* or *abba*. These irregularities are illustrated in the famous passages below:

Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress trees!
Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day
Across the mournful marbles play!
Who hath not learned, in hours of faith,
  The truth to flesh and sense unknown,
That Life is ever lord of Death,
  And Love can never lose its own!

From "Snowbound," by John Greenleaf Whittier

Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
  This is my own, my native land?
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned
  From wandering on a foreign strand?
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;
For him no minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim,—
Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentred all in self,

Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonored, and unsung.

From "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," by Sir Walter Scott

Arnold's elegy on Wordsworth, "Memorial Verses, April, 1850," too long to quote here, affords excellent opportunity for studying the short couplet.

In the following poem is seen a departure from the usual custom of printing the couplets continuously. Note the suggestive power of the couplet stanzas.

DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES

They say that dead men tell no tales!

Except of barges with red sails
And sailors mad for nightingales;

Except of jongleurs stretched at ease
Beside old highways through the trees;

Except of dying moons that break
The hearts of lads who lie awake;

Except of fortresses in shade,
And heroes crumbled and betrayed.

But dead men tell no tales, they say!

Except old tales that burn away
The stifling tapestries of day:

Old tales of life, of love and hate,
Of time and space, and will, and fate.

Haniel Long (1888-)

Night and sleep vie with death as favorite themes of poets. Shakespeare's "sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care" is one of more than seventy passages on sleep in Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations*. The poem below may be compared with William Collins's "Ode to Evening," Blake's "Night," and Shelley's "To Night."

HYMN TO THE NIGHT

I heard the trailing garments of the Night
Sweep through her marble halls!
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light
From the celestial walls!

I felt her presence, by its spell of might,
Stoop o'er me from above;
The calm, majestic presence of the Night,
As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,
The manifold, soft chimes,
That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,
Like some old poet's rhymes.

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air
My spirit drank repose;
The fountain of perpetual peace flows there,—
From those deep cisterns flows.

O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear
What man has borne before!
Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care,
And they complain no more.

Peace! Peace! Orestes-like I breathe this prayer!
Descend with broad-winged flight,
The welcome, the thrice-prayed for, the most fair,
The best-beloved Night!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882)

After reading the poems above and below this paragraph, one may find it hard to believe that lovers of Poe's melody have decried Longfellow, while admirers of Longfellow's homely philosophy have approved the epithet "jingle man" which Emerson applied to Poe. "To One in Paradise" presents no uniformity in rime. To apply a term suggested by C. Alphonso Smith, the poet has here "liquefied' the stanza, or has, in other words, made it a more flexible unit.

TO ONE IN PARADISE

Thou wast that all to me, love,
For which my soul did pine:
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain and a shrine
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!
Ah, starry Hope, that didst arise
But to be overcast!
A voice from out the Future cries,
"On! on!"—but o'er the Past
(Dim gulf) my spirit hovering lies
Mute, motionless, aghast.

For, alas! alas! with me
The light of Life is o'er!
No more—no more—no more—
(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar.

And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy gray eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams—
In what ethereal dances,
By what eternal streams.

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)

We quote now a poem of irregular meter. "Kubla Khan" stands with Keats's "Hyperion" among the most interesting fragmentary poems in the English language. Coleridge was, like his friend DeQuincey, a victim of the opium habit. One afternoon, after taking a dose of the drug, he fell asleep while reading from a book of Oriental travels a description of the palace of an emperor, the Khan Kubla. Coleridge claimed to have composed while asleep several hundred lines; some he wrote down immediately on awaking, the others he was, after an interruption, unable to recall. There is no good reason for doubting Coleridge's account of the composition of the poem, for similar instances are well authenticated, and the poem itself has a dreamy quality difficult to counterfeit. The variation in rime, in length of line, in vowels and in consonants, is worthy of serious study on the part of the student who desires to know how the poet

attains various effects. "Strange," says Theodore Watts-Dunton in his article on *Poetry* in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "that it is not in an ode at all but in this unique lyric 'Kubla Khan,' descriptive of imaginative landscape, that an English poet has at last conquered the crowning difficulty of writing in irregular meters. Having broken away from all restraints of couplet and stanza—having caused his rhymes and pauses to fall just where and just when the emotion demands that they should fall, scorning the exigencies of makeshift no less than the exigencies of stanza—he has found what every writer of irregular English odes has sought in vain, a music as entrancing as natural, and at the same time as inscrutable, as the music of the winds or of the sea."

KUBLA KHAN

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
  Down to a sunless sea.

So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And here were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted

As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced:
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,

And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834)

This chapter may well be concluded with Shelley's "To a Skylark," a poem which combines the iambic and trochaic meters in an effective lyric manner. Because of their musical notes and their ability to rise above the earth, birds have always appealed to the imagination of poets. The nightingale has been celebrated in entire poems or in famous passages by Milton, Mark Akenside, Coleridge, Keats, Matthew Arnold, and Robert Bridges. The popular American mocking-bird is the subject of poems by Lanier, Walt Whitman, and Albert Pike. The later of Wordsworth's two poems on the skylark affords a marked contrast with the poem below. While Shelley admires the bird's ability to escape from the earth, Wordsworth sees it as a

Type of the wise who soar, but never roam;
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home!

TO A SKYLARK

Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from Heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are bright'ning,
Thou dost float and run;
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen,—but yet I hear thy shrill delight,

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see—we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As when Night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and Heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a Poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love,—which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aërial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-wingèd thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awaken'd flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous and clear and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, Sprite or Bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus Hymeneal,
Or triumphal chant,
Matched with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt,
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields or waves or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest—but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream—
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not;
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow
The world should listen then—as I am listening now.

Percy Bysshe Shelley (*1792-1822*)

CHAPTER IV

THE TRIPLE METERS

Before the poet begins to write . . . he should ask himself whether his natural impulse is towards the weighty iambic movement, whose primary function is to state, or towards those lighter movements which we still call, for want of more convenient words, anapæstic and dactylic, whose primary function is to suggest.—*Theodore Watts-Dunton in "Poetry," Encyclopædia Britannica (Eleventh Edition)*

In discussing the elementary phenomena of English poetics, we have had occasion to explain briefly the triple measures, anapestic and dactylic. The main purpose of this chapter is to group representative poems with the view of affording a somewhat extended acquaintance with the use and possibilities of these rhythms. For reasons explained in the preceding chapter, poems purely anapestic or dactylic are rare. The movement of a poem is, however, decidedly triple when fifty per cent of the feet contain two unstressed syllables.

A poem in a triple meter tends, in unskilled hands, to be wordy, for important thoughts are carried chiefly by accented syllables of which it has a relative scarcity. With appropriate subject-matter and in the hands of true poets the triple rhythms lend themselves, however, to the production of remarkable word music. In these measures Shelley and Swinburne achieved faultless works

of art, and the major nineteenth century poets were generally successful.

The anapestic meter seems especially adapted to subjects involving movement or action. We quote a poem which in content and spirit is well suited to the expression it receives. Few widely known poems—outside of light verse—are as purely anapestic as the one below. Sennacherib was an Assyrian king who invaded Palestine. Ashur and Baal were high gods in the religion of the Assyrians. See *2 Kings*, xix: 35.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
The host with their banners at sunset were seen;
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
The host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and forever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

George Noel Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824)

Byron's "O Talk Not to Me" has a spirited anapestic movement. Note the characteristic iambic substitutions in the first feet of the lines. In the *Golden Treasury*, Palgrave places this poem directly after Coleridge's "Love," which begins

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

O TALK NOT TO ME

O talk not to me of a name great in story;
The days of our youth are the days of our glory;
And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty,
Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow that is wrinkled?
'Tis but as a dead flower with May-dew besprinkled:
Then away with all such from the head that is hoary—
What care I for the wreaths than can *only* give glory?

Oh FAME!—if I e'er took delight in thy praises,
'Twas less for the sake of thy high-sounding phrases,
Than to see the bright eyes of the dear one discover
She thought that I was not unworthy to love her.

There chiefly I sought thee, *there* only I found thee;
Her glance was the best of the rays that surround thee;
When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright in my story,
I knew it was love, and I felt it was glory.

George Noel Gordon, Lord Byron (*1788-1824*)

In the case of "The Poplar Field" it is to be doubted if the anapestic is the meter best adapted to the subject. The key-note is found in the transitory quality of human joy and human life—a subject which seems to demand a more sober rhythm. On the contrary, Tennyson, referring to this poem, said to Palgrave: "People nowadays, I believe, hold this style and meter light; I wish there were any who could put words together with such exquisite flow and evenness." The river Ouse, here referred to, passes near the scene of the author's retirement in northern Buckinghamshire.

THE POPLAR FIELD

The poplars are fell'd; farewell to the shade
And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade;
The winds play no longer and sing in the leaves,
Nor Ouse on his bosom their image receives.

Twelve years have elapsed since I first took a view
Of my favourite field, and the bank where they grew:
And now in the grass behold they are laid,
And the tree is my seat that once lent me a shade.

The blackbird has fled to another retreat,
Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat;
And the scene where his melody charm'd me before
Resounds with his sweet-flowing ditty no more.

My fugitive years are all hasting away,
And I must ere long lie as lowly as they,
With a turf on my breast and a stone at my head,
Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead.

'Tis a sight to engage me, if anything can,
To muse on the perishing pleasure of man;
Though his life be a dream, his enjoyments, I see,
Have a being less durable even than he.

William Cowper (*1731-1800*)

The masterly "A Forsaken Garden" affords an excellent contrast with the poem just quoted. Here the emphasis is not on anything human; it is on a picture of desolation. The rushing iambic-anapestic rhythm is exceedingly effective, but the author relies chiefly on other devices of poetry. It is not altogether alliteration which gives the subtle quality to lines like

When the weeds that grew green from the graves of its roses.

The explanation lies largely in the skilful choice of the vowels in the accented syllables. No lover of supreme poetic technique should fail to read in this connection the choruses of Swinburne's *Atalanta in Calydon*, which stands with Milton's *Samson Agonistes* and Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* in the great trio of English imitations of ancient Greek drama.

A FORSAKEN GARDEN

In a coign of the cliff between lowland and highland,
At the sea-down's edge between windward and lee,
Walled round with rocks as an inland island,
The ghost of a garden fronts the sea.
A girdle of brushwood and thorn encloses
The steep square slope of the blossomless bed
Where the weeds that grew green from the graves of its roses
Now lie dead.

The fields fall southward, abrupt and broken,
To the low last edge of the long lone land.
If a step should sound or a word be spoken,
Would a ghost not rise at the strange guest's hand?
So long have the gray bare walks lain guestless,
Through branches and briars if a man make way,
He shall find no life but the sea-wind's, restless
Night and day.

The dense hard passage is blind and stifled
That crawls by a track none turn to climb
To the strait waste place that the years have rifled
Of all but the thorns that are touched not of time.
The thorns he spares when the rose is taken;
The rocks are left when he wastes the plain.
The wind that wanders, the weeds wind-shaken,
These remain.

Not a flower to be prest of the foot that falls not;
As the heart of a dead man the seed-plots are dry;
From the thicket of thorns whence the nightingale calls not,
Could she call, there were never a rose to reply.
Over the meadows that blossom and wither
Rings but the note of a sea-bird's song;
Only the sun and the rain come hither
All year long.

The sun burns sere and the rain dishevels
  One gaunt bleak blossom of scentless breath.
Only the wind here hovers and revels
  In a round where life seems barren as death.
Here there was laughing of old, there was weeping,
  Haply, of lovers none ever will know,
Whose eyes went seaward a hundred sleeping
    Years ago.

Heart handfast in heart as they stood, "Look thither,"
  Did he whisper? "Look forth from the flowers to the sea;
For the foam-flowers endure when the rose-blossoms wither,
  And men that love lightly may die—but we?"
And the same wind sang and the same waves whitened,
  And or ever the garden's last petals were shed,
In the lips that had whispered, the eyes that had lightened,
    Love was dead.

Or they loved their life through, and then went whither?
  And were one to the end—but what end who knows?
Love deep as the sea as a rose must wither,
  As the rose-red seaweed that mocks the rose.
Shall the dead take thought for the dead to love them?
  What love was ever as deep as a grave?
They are loveless now as the grass above them,
    Or the wave.

All are at one now, roses and lovers,
  Not known of the cliffs and the fields and the sea.
Not a breath of the time that has been hovers
  In the air now soft with a summer to be.
Not a breath shall there sweeten the seasons hereafter,
  Of the flowers or the lovers that laugh now or weep,
When as they that are free now of weeping and laughter
    We shall sleep.

Here death may deal not again forever;
  Here change may come not till all change end.
From the graves they have made they shall rise up never,
  Who have left naught living to ravage and rend.
Earth, stones, and thorns of the wild ground growing,
  While the sun and the rain live, these shall be;
Till a last wind's breath upon all these blowing
    Roll the sea.

Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff crumble,
  Till terrace and meadow the deep gulfs drink,
Till the strength of the waves of the high tides humble
  The fields that lessen, the rocks that shrink;
Here now in his triumph where all things falter,
  Stretched out on the spoils that his own hand spread,
As a god self-slain on his own strange altar,
    Death lies dead.

Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909)

The Napoleonic wars, like all great struggles, left an impress on literature. The great world novels, *Vanity Fair* and *Les Misérables*, have their Waterloo episodes. Among the most quoted parts of Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* are the Waterloo stanzas. Wordsworth and Coleridge each vibrated like a harp to certain phases of the contemporary world struggle. Perhaps the best known short poem inspired by this war was written by Charles Wolfe, a man famous for nothing else. "The Burial of Sir John Moore at Corunna" combines soldierly dignity with simplicity. Its keynote is the same as that of Rupert Brooke's great sonnet, "The Soldier."

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE AT CORUNNA

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corpse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning;
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light
And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Not in sheet or in shroud we wound him;
But he lay like a Warrior taking his rest,
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
But we steadfastly gaz'd on the face that was dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought, as we hollow'd his narrow bed
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
That the Foe and the Stranger would tread o'er his head,
And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him,—
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done
When the clock struck the hour for retiring:
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone—
But we left him alone with his glory.

Charles Wolfe (*1791-1823*)

The anapests in "Prospice" assist in conveying the note of anticipated triumph. Mrs. Browning had been dead but a few months when the poem was written. When her husband, late in life, penned his swan-song, the "Epilogue" to *Asolando*, his view had not changed. Browning, the poet for those growing old, vigorously opposes Byron's thesis that

The days of our youth are the days of our glory.

For a virile philosophical poem glorifying the latter part of life, see "Rabbi Ben Ezra." *Prospice* means look forward.

PROSPICE

Fear death?—to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go:

For the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forebore,
And bade me creep past.

No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
Of pain, darkness, and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!

Robert Browning (*1812-1889*)

"Prospice" and "Coronach" afford a striking contrast in thought. Scott, in this song from *The Lady of the Lake*, is not, however, giving his own views of death. The work of a narrative poet may be nearly if not wholly impersonal. The lyric poet may, on the other hand, be considered to hold the views he expresses in a subjective work. That he may sometimes portray opposite moods is, nevertheless, forcefully illustrated by the titles of two of Tennyson's poems, "Nothing Will Die" and "All Things Will Die." The word *coronach*, Gaelic in origin, means a song of lamentation; *correi* is Scottish for a hollow in the side of a hill; *cumber*, distress or difficulty.

CORONACH

He is gone on the mountain,
  He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
  When our need was the sorest.
The font, reappearing,
  From the rain-drops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
  To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper
  Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
  Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing
  Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing
  When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,
  Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
  How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain,
  Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
  Thou art gone, and forever!

Sir Walter Scott (*1771-1823*)

The next two poems, one very short and one rather long, are both anapestic. While Shelley's "The Cloud" is a complete poem, "The Year's at the Spring" is only a part, the famous song of the girl from the silk-mills in Browning's drama, *Pippa Passes*.

THE YEAR'S AT THE SPRING

The year's at the spring
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hillside's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn:
God's in his heaven—
All's right with the world!

Robert Browning (1812-1889)

"The Cloud" has often been quoted to illustrate the anapestic meter. The internal rimes contribute abundantly to the melody. Note the numerous iambic feet even in a poem extremely anapestic in its effect.

THE CLOUD

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,
From the seas and the streams;
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,
And their great pines groan aghast;

And all the night, 'tis my pillow white,
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.
Sublime on the towers of my skyey bowers,
Lightning my pilot sits;
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,
It struggles and howls at fits;
Over earth and ocean with gentle motion,
This pilot is guiding me,
Lured by the love of the genii that move
In the depths of the purple sea;
Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,
Over the lakes and the plains,
Wherever he dream, under mountain or stream,
The Spirit he loves remains;
And I all the while bask in heaven's blue smile,
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
And his burning plumes outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
When the morning star shines dead;
As on the jag of a mountain crag,
Which an earthquake rocks and swings,
An eagle alit one moment may sit
In the light of its golden wings.
And when sunset may breathe, from the lit sea beneath,
Its ardors of rest and of love,
And the crimson pall of eve may fall
From the depth of heaven above,
With wings folded I rest, on mine airy nest,
As still as a brooding dove.

That orbèd maiden, with white fire laden,
Whom mortals call the Moon,
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,
By the midnight breezes strewn;

And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof,
The stars peep behind her and peer;
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,
Like a swarm of golden bees,
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,
Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
Are each paved with the moon and these.

I bind the sun's throne with a burning zone,
And the moon's with a girdle of pearl;
The volcanoes are dim, and the stars reel and swim,
When the whirlwinds my banner unfurl.
From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,
Over a torrent sea,
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof,—
The mountains its columns be.
The triumphal arch, through which I march,
With hurricane, fire, and snow,
When the powers of the air are chained to my chair,
Is the million-colored bow;
The sphere-fire above its soft colors wove,
While the moist earth was laughing below.

I am the daughter of earth and water,
And the nursling of the sky;
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores;
I change, but I can not die.
For after the rain, when with never a stain
The pavilion of heaven is bare,
And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams
Build up the blue dome of air,
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,
And out of the caverns of rain,

Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb,
I arise and unbuild it again.

Percy Bysshe Shelley (*1792-1822*)

It has been explained why, in English, trochaic verse is less natural and anapestic verse less frequent than iambic. Dactylic verse, being at once descending and triple, combines the difficulties of trochaic and anapestic verse, and is not very common. Triple rime is very rare, yet triple rime is a requisite of pure dactylic verse, if it is to rime at all.

a x x | a x x | a x x | a x x
Barney McGee, there's no end of good luck in you,
Will-o-the-wisp, with a flicker of Puck in you,
Wild as a bull-pup, and all of his pluck in you. . . .

From "Barney McGee," by Richard Hovey

Verse on such a pattern as this could scarcely be more than a *tour de force*, but the allowing of *catalexis* (omission of unaccented syllable or syllables in the last foot of a descending line) makes dactylic verse possible. The last foot of a line is almost always a trochee or a solitary accented syllable. The two types of line are illustrated in this passage from the "Boat Song" in Scott's *Lady of the Lake:*

a x x | a x x | a x x | a x
Hail to the Chief who in triumph advances!
a x x | a x x | a x x | a
Honored and blessed be the evergreen Pine.

Tennyson's "A Welcome to Alexandra: March 7, 1863" has lines which exhibit a processional dignity similar to that of these lines from Scott.

The poem below is dactylic. The lines are all dimeters, pure or catalectic. Note the irregularities, some but not all of which can be explained by considering the lines continuous (*e.g.* Dreadfully | staring through | muddy im | purity).

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS

One more Unfortunate
  Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate
  Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly,
  Lift her with care;
Fashioned so slenderly,
  Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments,
Clinging like cerements;
Whilst the wave constantly
  Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
  Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully;
Think of her mournfully,
  Gently and humanly,
Not of the stains of her—
All that remains of her
  Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
  Rash and undutiful:
Past all dishonour,
Death has left on her
  Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
  One of Eve's family—
Wipe those poor lips of hers
  Oozing so clammily.

Loop up her tresses
  Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses;
Whilst wonderment guesses,
  Where was her home?

Who was her father?
  Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
  Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
  Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
  Under the sun!
Oh! it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
  Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly,
  Feelings had changed:
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence;
Even God's providence
  Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
  With many a light

From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood with amazement,
  Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
  Made her tremble and shiver;
But not the dark arch,
  Or the black flowing river:
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery
  Swift to be hurled—
Any where, any where
  Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly—
No matter how coldly
  The rough river ran—
Over the brink of it,
Picture it—think of it,
  Dissolute Man!
Lave in it, drink of it,
  Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly,
  Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly,
  Young, and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
  Decently, kindly,
Smooth and compose them;
And her eyes, close them,
  Staring so blindly.

Dreadfully staring
  Through muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
  Fixed on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurr'd by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
  Into her rest.—
Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
  Over her breast!

Owning her weakness,
  Her evil behaviour,
And leaving with meekness
  Her sins to her Saviour!

Thomas Hood (1799-1845)

"The Lost Leader," a dactylic poem the meter of which is less obvious than that of "The Bridge of Sighs," was written shortly after the venerable Wordsworth had, in 1843, been made poet laureate. Wordsworth as a young man had been a radical, and the youthful Browning for the moment misjudged the sobering of age as a selling out to mammon. The conferring of the laurel traditionally presupposed official poems; but, in justice to Wordsworth, it must be said that he accepted the honor on the express condition that nothing be expected from him. The phrase "a handful of silver" refers to the meagerness of the poet's pension in comparison with the rewards lavished on other public men. Members of some

governmental orders—the French Legion of Honor, for instance—today wear ribbons or rosettes in the buttonholes of their civilian dress. For another famous poetic attack of one great man upon another, see "Ichabod" in which Whittier flayed Webster. For an example of ferocious diatribe, see William Watson's sonnet "To the Sultan."

THE LOST LEADER

Just for a handful of silver he left us,
  Just for a riband to stick in his coat—
Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,
  Lost all the others she lets us devote;
They, with the gold to give, doled him out silver,
  So much was theirs who so little allowed;
How all our copper had gone for his service!
  Rags—were they purple, his heart had been proud!
We that had loved him so, followed him, honored him,
  Lived in his mild and magnificent eye,
Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,
  Made him our pattern to live and to die!
Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,
  Burns, Shelley, were with us,—they watch from
    their graves!
He alone breaks from the van and the freemen,
  He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves!
We shall march prospering,—not through his presence;
  Songs may inspirit us,—not from his lyre;
Deeds will be done,—while he boasts his quiescence,
  Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade aspire:
Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul more,
  One task more declined, one more footpath untrod,
One more devils'-triumph and sorrow for angels,
  One wrong more to man, one more insult to God!

Life's night begins: let him never come back to us!
There would be doubt, hesitation and pain,
Forced praise on our part—the glimmer of twilight,
Never glad confident morning again!
Best fight on well, for we taught him,—strike gallantly,
Menace our heart ere we master his own;
Then let him receive the new knowledge and wait us,
Pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne!

Robert Browning (1812-1889)

In the above dactylic poem, the reader may have noticed a frequent divergence between the metrical and the sense grouping of the unaccented syllables. Consider the lines:

We that had loved him so, followed him, honored him,
Lived in his mild and magnificent eye.

The phrases *followed him* and *honored him* are not only dactylic by scansion, but are units in speech-formation. On the contrary, *lived in his* is the scansion unit, while *in his mild* is the thought unit centered around the one stress. If the thought-grouping of syllables were the basis of scansion, much dactylic poetry could be classified as anapestic with a single accented syllable constituting the first foot of each line:

a | *x* *x* *a* | *x* *x* *a* | *x* *x* *a*
Lived in his mild and magnificent eye

The greatest influence toward making the dactylic meter seem ascending is, nevertheless, the frequent substitution of a trochee in the first foot of an iambic or an anapestic line. The reader, accustomed to ascending meters, senses the first part of a dactylic line not as *axx* | *a*, but as *ax* | *xa*. For the purpose of metrical study and descrip-

tion it is best to adhere to the traditional dactylic scansion, but the legitimacy of the alternative markings should not be ignored. Noyes's "Unity" affords a good illustration; it is dactylic; but, if one reads it slowly, the natural grouping of words will show that, barring perhaps the first word in each line, the movement of the poem is ascending.

UNITY

Heart of my heart, the world is young;
  Love lies hidden in every rose!
Every song that the skylark sung
  Once, we thought, must come to a close:
Now we know the spirit of song,
  Song that is merged in the chant of the whole,
Hand in hand as we wander along,
  What should we doubt of the years that roll?

Heart of my heart, we can not die!
  Love triumphant in flower and tree,
Every life that laughs at the sky
  Tells us nothing can cease to be:
One, we are one with a song today,
  One with the clover that scents the wold,
One with the Unknown, far away,
  One with the stars, when earth grows old.

Heart of my heart, we are one with the wind,
  One with the clouds that are whirled o'er the lea,
One in many, O broken and blind,
  One as the waves are at one with the sea!
Ay! when life seems scattered apart,
  Darkens, ends as a tale that is told,
One, we are one, O heart of my heart,
  One, still one, while the world grows old.

Alfred Noyes (1880-)

What has just been said of the dactylic rhythm is not usually true of its sister descending rhythm, the trochaic, except in the case of some abnormally long lines. The number of English dissyllables of *ax* pronunciation makes the trochaic, in fact, a not unnatural rhythm:

a x *a x a x*
Happy field or mossy cavern,
a x *a x a x*
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern.

The rollicking song from Noyes's *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern* is dactylic. Old Saint Paul's, destroyed in the fire of 1666, stood on the site of the present cathedral, which was designed by Sir Christopher Wren and completed in 1719. The Mermaid, a famous tavern in Elizabethan London, has resulted in at least two other good poems, one by Theodore Watts-Dunton and one—from which we have just quoted—by Keats.

SEVEN WISE MEN

Seven wise men on an old black settle,
Seven wise men of the Mermaid Inn,
Ringing blades of the one right metal
What is the best that a blade can win?
Bread and cheese and a few small kisses?
Ha! Ha! Ha! Would you take them—you?
—Ay, if Dame Venus would add to her blisses,
A roaring fire and a friend or two!

Chorus:
Up now, answer me, tell me true!—
—Ay, if the hussy would add to her blisses
A roaring fire and a friend or two!

What will you say when the world is dying?
  What, when the last wild midnight falls
Dark, too dark for the bat to be flying
  Round the ruins of old St. Paul's?
What will be last of the lights to perish?
  What but the little red ring we knew,
Lighting the hands and the hearts that cherish
  A fire, a fire, and a friend or two!

Chorus:
  Up now, answer me, tell me true!
  What will be last of the stars to perish?
  —The fire that lighteth a friend or two!

Up now, answer me on your mettle,
  Wisest man of the Mermaid Inn,
Soberest man on the old black settle,
  Out with the truth! It was never a sin.—
Well, if God saved me alone of the seven,
  Telling me *you* must be damned, or *you*,
"This," I would say, "this is hell, not heaven
  Give me the fire and a friend or two."

Chorus:
  Steel was never so ringing true:
  "God," we would say, "this is hell, not heaven!
  Give us the fire, and a friend or two!"

Alfred Noyes (*1880-*)

The above poem exhibits an effective use of the refrain. The phrase "fire and a friend or two" becomes, with each repetition, more intense in its meaning. Similar refrains are the "Nevermore" of Poe's "Raven" and the "God save the Tsar!" of Thomas Bailey Aldrich's "Batuschka."

Inspired by the Latin and Greek epic masterpieces,

writers in English have, as has been stated, often sought to develop in English an imitation of the classical dactylic hexameter. Undoubtedly, the best known of the resulting poems is Longfellow's *Evangeline*, the romantic subject of which was considered by Hawthorne and Whittier before it was used by Longfellow. The subjoined passage, the prelude to the narrative, sets the key for the poem.

From EVANGELINE

This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks,
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight,
Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad and prophetic,
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms.
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neighboring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the forest.

This is the forest primeval; but where are the hearts that beneath it
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland the voice of the huntsman?
Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Acadian farmers,—
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the woodlands,
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an image of heaven?
Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers forever departed!
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty blasts of October

Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them far o'er the ocean.
Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful village of Grand-Pré.
Ye who believe in affection that hopes, and endures, and is patient,
Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of woman's devotion,
List to the mournful tradition, still sung by the pines of the forest;
List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the happy.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (*1807-1882*)

Longfellow, imitating Goethe's practice in *Hermann and Dorothea*, as well as classical models, substituted in unaccented positions one syllable for two when he considered the one "long" enough—for example gar*ments* in line 2. The experiment may be regarded as a success, but, as Poe pointed out, there are prosy passages—for instance, "men whose lives glided on like rivers." Treatises on versification contain references to other poems in this meter and to imitations of many other classical meters. With the possible exception of the dactylic hexameter, however, all these exotic forms have failed to take vigorous root in English.

We quote a poem showing very varied effects in triple rhythm. Sidney Lanier was a poet, a musician, and a critic of verse. Habersham and Hall are Georgia counties on the upper reaches of the Chattahoochee. As an expression of American idealism, compare this poem with Longfellow's "Excelsior." For the successful employment of onomatopœia, compare it with the lyric portions of Tennyson's "The Brook."

THE SONG OF THE CHATTAHOOCHEE

Out of the hills of Habersham,
Down the valleys of Hall,
I hurry amain to reach the plain,
Run the rapid and leap the fall.
Split at the rock and together again,
Accept my bed, or narrow or wide,
And flee from folly on every side
With a lover's pain to attain the plain
Far from the hills of Habersham,
Far from the valleys of Hall.

All down the hills of Habersham,
All through the valleys of Hall,
The rushes cried *Abide, abide,*
The willful waterweeds held me in thrall,
The laving laurel turned my tide,
The ferns and the fondling grass said *Stay,*
The dewberry dipped for to work delay,
And the little reeds sighed *Abide, abide,*
Here in the hills of Habersham,
Here in the valleys of Hall.

High o'er the hills of Habersham,
Veiling the valleys of Hall,
The hickory told me manifold
Fair tales of shade, the poplar tall
Wrought me her shadowy self to hold,
The chestnut, the oak, the walnut, the pine,
Overleaning, with flickering meaning and sign,
Said, *Pass not, so cold, these manifold*
Deep shades of the hills of Habersham,
These glades in the valleys of Hall.

And oft in the hills of Habersham,
And oft in the valleys of Hall,
The white quartz shone, and the smooth brook-stone
Did bar me of passage with friendly brawl,
And many a luminous jewel lone,
—Crystals clear, or a-cloud with mist,
Ruby, garnet, and amethyst—
Made lures with the lights of streaming stone
In the clefts of the hills of Habersham,
In the beds of the valleys of Hall.

But, oh, not the hills of Habersham,
And oh, not the valleys of Hall,
Avail: I am fain for to water the plain.
Downward the voices of Duty call—
Downward, to toil and be mixed with the main,
The dry fields burn, and the mills are to turn,
And a myriad flowers mortally yearn,
And the lordly main from beyond the plain
Calls o'er the hills of Habersham,
Calls through the valleys of Hall.

Sidney Lanier (1842-1881)

In the next selection the two dactylic lines do not detract from the anapestic movement. *Gúl* is a Persian word for the rose. This passage is supposed to have been suggested to Byron by Mignon's song, "*Kennst du das Land wo die Citronen blühn,*" in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister.*

From THE BRIDE OF ABYDOS

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime,
Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle,
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime?

Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine;
Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppress'd with perfume,
Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gúl in her bloom;
Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit,
And the voice of the nightingale never is mute:
Where the tints of the earth, and the hues of the sky,
In colour though varied, in beauty may vie,
And the purple of Ocean is deepest in dye;
Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
And all, save the spirit of man, is divine?
'Tis the clime of the East; 'tis the land of the Sun—
Can he smile on such deeds as his children have done?
Oh! wild as the accents of lovers' farewell
Are the hearts which they bear, and the tales which they tell.

George Noel Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824)

The meter of "The Knight's Tomb" is almost too irregular for classification. Gilman, a biographer of Coleridge, states that the poem was composed "as an experiment in metre"—a type of experiment that Coleridge delighted in. Note how the triple rhythm merges into a movement of exceedingly slow tempo. In *Ivanhoe* and *Castle Dangerous* Scott misquoted ("The knights are dust," etc.) and popularized the last three lines.

THE KNIGHT'S TOMB

Where is the grave of Sir Arthur O'Kellyn?
Where may the grave of that good man be?—
By the side of a spring, on the breast of Helvellyn,
Under the twigs of a young birch tree!
The oak that in summer was sweet to hear,
And rustled its leaves in the fall of the year,

And whistled and roar'd in the winter alone,
Is gone,—and the birch in its stead is grown.—
The Knight's bones are dust,
And his good sword rust;—
His soul is with the saints, I trust.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (*1772-1834*)

As a tribute to the power of poetry O'Shaughnessy's exuberantly rhythmical "Ode" surpasses Tennyson's widely known "The Poet." The complete "Ode" consists of nine stanzas, but is usually cut to three. Nineveh was the ancient capital of Assyria; Babel was the tower (see *Genesis* xi, 9) at the building of which there was a confusion of tongues.

ODE

We are the music-makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams;—
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams:
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world forever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties
We build up the world's great cities,
And out of a fabulous story
We fashion an empire's glory:
One man with a dream, at pleasure,
Shall go forth and conquer a crown;
And three with a new song's measure
Can trample a kingdom down.

We, in the ages lying
  In the buried past of the earth,
Built Nineveh with our sighing,
  And Babel itself in our mirth;
And o'erthrew them with prophesying
  To the old of the new world's worth;
For each age is a dream that is dying,
  Or one that is coming to birth.

Arthur William Edgar O'Shaughnessy (1844-1881)

"Break, Break, Break," a lament for Arthur Henry Hallam, was intended as a part of *In Memoriam*, but, because of its different meter, was printed separately. The first line presents the phenomenon of omitting all the unaccented syllables. Whether the omissions be explained on the ground of pauses or on the ground of the prolongation of the accented syllables, the three-word lines are trimeters—as are the other lines of the poem. "Break, Break, Break" proves that a poet's mind may transcend his surroundings. "It was made," says Tennyson, "in a Lincolnshire lane at five o'clock in the morning between blossoming hedges."

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

Break, break, break,
  On thy cold gray stones, O Sea,
And I would that my tongue could utter
  The thoughts that arise in me.

O, well for the fisherman's boy,
  That he shouts with his sister at play!
O, well for the sailor lad,
  That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O, for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

Modern poets show an occasional use of accented syllables in pairs and even in threes—traits illustrated in the two following poems. The marked words in these lines could hardly be read except as indicated:

a a
I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree.
a a a
I hear it in the deep heart's core.
a a a a a a
It's a warm wind, the west wind, full of birds' cries.

This variation from the traditions of English meter is one symptom of the poetic iconoclasm of today. In these poems it is well handled and apparently has possibilities. Like so much that is seemingly new, it is simply very old. For example, the *xxaa* of *it's a fine land* was the Latin foot, *ionic a minore.*

THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a-glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavement gray,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

William Butler Yeats (1865-)

THE WEST WIND

It's a warm wind, the west wind, full of birds' cries;
I never hear the west wind but tears are in my eyes;
For it comes from the west lands, the old brown hills,
And April's in the west wind, and daffodils.

It's a fine land, the west land, for hearts as tired as mine,
Apple orchards blossom there, and the air's like wine.
There is cool green grass there, where men may lie at rest,
And the thrushes are in song there, fluting from the nest.

"Will you not come home, brother? You have been long away.
It's April, and blossom time, and white is the spray;
And bright is the sun, brother, and warm is the rain,—
Will you not come home, brother, home to us again?

"The young corn is green, brother, where the rabbits run,
It's blue sky, and white clouds, and warm rain and sun.
It's a song to a man's soul, brother, fire to a man's brain,
To hear the wild bees and see the merry spring again.

"Larks are singing in the west, brother, above the green wheat,
So will you not come home, brother, and rest your tired feet?
I've a balm for bruised hearts, brother, sleep for aching eyes,"
Says the warm wind, the west wind, full of birds' cries.

It's the white road westwards is the road I must tread
To the green grass, the cool grass, and rest for heart and head,
To the violets and the brown brooks and the thrushes' song,
In the fine land, the west land the land where I belong.

John Masefield (*1874-*)

CHAPTER V

IAMBIC PENTAMETER

I salute thee, Mantovano, I that loved thee since my day began,
Wielder of the stateliest measure ever moulded by the lips of man.

Tennyson: "To Virgil"

For longer, more elevated poems, English poetry has no one metrical form comparable to the classical hexameter of Homer and Vergil. Blank verse, the heroic couplet, the Spenserian stanza, and several other forms have been used in its stead. These forms, however, all employ the iambic pentameter line ($5xa$), which in English poetry is used oftener than any other. It is more flexible and less monotonous than the tetrameter line, which tends to divide into two equal parts. Either with or without rime, iambic pentameter is the meter commonly employed in narrative, dramatic, reflective, and descriptive poetry; in other words, in longer poems of all kinds.

Blank verse, which is iambic pentameter without rime, is the most distinguished of all English metrical forms. It is the meter which we instinctively associate with the two greatest English poets, Shakespeare and Milton. One of Emerson's very interesting fragments will illustrate the metrical structure of blank verse:

This shining moment is an edifice
Which the Omnipotent cannot rebuild.

Blank verse was introduced from the Italian in the reign of Henry VIII by the Earl of Surrey, who used it in an incomplete translation of Vergil's *Æneid*. A few years later it became the established metrical form of Elizabethan drama. Christopher Marlowe, who was the greatest of Shakespeare's predecessors, was the first to make effective use of it. "Marlowe's mighty line," as Ben Jonson called it, is characterized by a power and a melody that English poetry had not seen since Chaucer's time. Marlowe, who, like Keats and Shelley, died young, is the only Elizabethan dramatist of whom it can be conjectured that, had he lived, he might possibly have rivaled Shakespeare. His best known tragedy is *Doctor Faustus*, which Goethe, the author of a greater play upon the same theme, praised most highly. Faustus is a magician who calls up from the tomb Helen of Troy, the most beautiful woman of antiquity. When she appears, he speaks:

> Was this the face that launched a thousand ships
> And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?
> Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.
> Her lips suck forth my soul; see where it flies!—
> Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
> Here will I dwell, for Heaven is in these lips,
> And all is dross that is not Helena.
> I will be Paris, and for love of thee,
> Instead of Troy shall Wertenberg be sacked:
> And I will combat with weak Menelaus,
> And wear thy colours on my plumèd crest;
> Yea, I will wound Achilles in the heel,
> And then return to Helen for a kiss.
> Oh, thou art fairer than the evening air
> Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;

Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
When he appeared to hapless Semele:
More lovely than the monarch of the sky
In wanton Arethusa's azured arms:
And none but thou shalt be my paramour.

Winifred Kirkland has recently referred to these lines as "the highest praise ever given to any face in English literature." The wise poet in describing a beautiful woman does not employ a multitude of details, for no two of us have the same ideal of beauty; he describes instead the effect of her beauty on those who see her. It is thus that Homer, in the third book of the *Iliad*, describes the effect of Helen's beauty upon the Trojan elders. These unsusceptible old men, as they see Helen approaching, say one to the other, "Small blame is it that Trojans and well-greaved Achaians should for such a woman long time suffer hardship; marvellously like is she to the immortal goddesses to look upon."

Shakespeare is, of course, the great master of dramatic blank verse. His earlier use of it resembles Marlowe's, although he gives the measure a grace and a beauty which Marlowe's lines rarely possess. We quote the well-known passage on the Poet which Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Theseus in *A Midsummer Night's Dream:*

The lunatic, the lover, and the poet
Are of imagination all compact.
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold;
That is the madman. The lover, all as frantic,
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt.
The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;

And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothings
A local habitation and a name.

Shakespeare's later plays have fewer passages, like the above selection, which can be detached from the context, for he learned to weave his poetry more closely into the texture of his plays. Among passages representing "the very highest poetical quality," Matthew Arnold has included the words which the dying Hamlet speaks to his bosom friend Horatio:

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story.

Shakespeare's blank verse is characterized by a marvelous variety and a perfect adaptation to the requirements of the stage. As he writes it, blank verse is the most flexible of all metrical forms. In his later verse the pauses occur less regularly at the end of the line, and the number of extra syllables increases. The dying words of Othello are an excellent example of Shakespeare's blank verse at its best. It will be remembered that the jealous Moorish general has killed his faithful wife Desdemona only to discover immediately afterward that she was innocent. Just before he commits suicide, Othello speaks:

I pray you, in your letters,
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice: then must you speak

Of one that lov'd not wisely but too well;
Of one not easily jealous, but being wrought
Perplex'd in the extreme; of one whose hand,
Like the base Indian, threw a pearl away
Richer than all his tribe; of one whose subdued eyes,
Albeit unused to the melting mood,
Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
Their medicinable gum. Set you down this;
And say besides, that in Aleppo once,
Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk
Beat a Venetian and traduc'd the state,
I took by the throat the circumcisèd dog,
And smote him, thus. (*Stabs himself.*)

Other Elizabethan dramatists besides Marlowe and Shakespeare wrote excellent blank verse, and none handled the measure more skilfully than Beaumont and Fletcher. John Fletcher collaborated not only with Beaumont but also with Shakespeare. The famous passage from *Henry VIII* which follows was almost certainly written by him and not by Shakespeare. Fletcher's blank verse is characterized by a great number of lines ending in an unstressed or half-stressed eleventh syllable. Wolsey, King Henry's minister, having displeased his master and lost his position, speaks to his successor, Thomas Cromwell:

Cromwell, I did not think to shed a tear
In all my miseries; but thou hast forced me,
Out of thy honest truth, to play the woman.
Let's dry our eyes: and thus far hear me, Cromwell;
And—when I am forgotten, as I shall be,
And sleep in dull cold marble, where no mention
Of me more must be heard of—say I taught thee,
Say Wolsey—that once trod the ways of glory,
And sounded all the depths and shoals of honour—

Found thee a way, out of his wreck, to rise in;
A sure and safe one, though thy master miss'd it.
Mark but my fall, and that that ruin'd me.
Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition;
By that sin fell the angels; how can man then,
The image of his Maker, hope to win by 't?
Love thyself last: cherish those hearts that hate thee:
Corruption wins not more than honesty.
Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace,
To silence envious tongues. Be just and fear not:
Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,
Thy God's, and truth's; then if thou fall'st, O Cromwell,
Thou fall'st a blessed martyr! Serve the king;
And,—pr'ythee, lead me in:
There take an inventory of all I have,
To the last penny; 'tis the king's: my robe
And my integrity to heaven, is all
I dare now call mine own. O Cromwell, Cromwell!
Had I but served my God with half the zeal
I served my king, he would not in mine age
Have left me naked to mine enemies.

To most persons, blank verse first suggests the name of John Milton, who, though less great a writer than Shakespeare, was a greater poet. Blank verse was Milton's favorite metrical form. He first used it in his *Comus*, a masque. As we should expect from a poet born while Shakespeare was still alive, Milton's earliest blank verse is Elizabethan rather than what we now think of as Miltonic. The elder brother's praise of chastity in *Comus* strikes the key-note of the play:

She that has that is clad in cómplete steel,
And, like a quivered nymph with arrows keen,
May trace huge forests, and unharboured heaths,

Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds;
Where, through the sacred rays of chastity,
No savage fierce, bandit, or mountaineer
Will dare to soil her virgin purity.
Yea, there where very desolation dwells,
By grots and caverns shagged with horrid shades,
She may pass on with unblenched majesty,
Be it not done in pride or in presumption.
Some say no evil thing that walks by night,
In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,
Blue meagre hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost,
That breaks his magic chains at curfew time,
No goblin or swart faëry of the mine,
Hath hurtful power o'er true virginity.

After the writing of *Comus*, some twenty years elapsed before Milton wrote his later poems, *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*, all of which are in blank verse. In these twenty years of service in the Puritan cause, Milton became almost a different man. After the Restoration in 1660, blind, poor, outcast, he sat down to write the great epic of Puritanism, *Paradise Lost*. His later poems lack the airy charm, the lightness, the grace of *Comus* and *L'Allegro;* but they possess a sublimity and a sonorous eloquence unequaled in British poetry. Milton's later blank verse does not greatly resemble that of Shakespeare, for narrative poetry calls for a different use of the metrical form. Milton himself explains his conception of the measure. "True musical delight," says he, "consists only in apt numbers, fit quantity of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another, not in the jingling sound of like endings." In the following description of Satan, Milton varies his pauses with masterly skill:

He, above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tower; his form had not yet lost
All its original brightness; nor appeared
Less than archangel ruined, and the excess
Of glory obscured: as when the sun, new risen,
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs. Darkened so, yet shone
Above them all the archangel; but his face
Deep scars of thunder had entrenched; and care
Sat on his faded cheek; but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge.

Since the time of Shakespeare and Milton, blank verse has been much used in reflective and descriptive poetry. Although Wordsworth wrote much very poor blank verse, no poet since Milton has handled the measure with greater skill. Wordsworth is preëminently a nature poet; no one has ever described natural phenomena with greater accuracy or finer insight. The following selection is from *The Prelude*, an autobiography of his boyhood and youth, which emphasizes those early influences which made him a poet. The reader should note the skill with which the poet manages to suggest, by the movement of his lines, the various motions and sounds of the skaters.

And in the frosty season, when the sun
Was set, and visible for many a mile
The cottage windows blazed through twilight gloom,
I heeded not their summons: happy time
It was indeed for all of us—for me

It was a time of rapture! Clear and loud
The village clock tolled six,—I wheeled about,
Proud and exulting like an untired horse
That cares not for his home. All shod with steel,
We hissed along the polished ice in games
Confederate, imitative of the chase
And woodland pleasures,—the resounding horn,
The pack loud chiming, and the hunted hare.
So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
And not a voice was idle; with the din
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud;
The leafless trees and every icy crag
Tinkled like iron; while far distant hills
Into the tumult sent an alien sound
Of melancholy not unnoticed, while the stars
Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the west
The orange sky of evening died away.
Not seldom from the uproar I retired
Into a silent bay, or sportively
Glanced sideway, leaving the tumultuous throng,
To cut across the reflex of a star
That fled, and, flying still before me, gleamed
Upon the glassy plain; and oftentimes,
When we had given our bodies to the wind,
And all the shadowy banks on either side
Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still
The rapid line of motion, then at once
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
Stopped short; yet still the solitary cliffs
Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had rolled
With visible motion her diurnal round!
Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,
Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched
Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.

Although all of the Romantic poets, except Scott, used blank verse with great effectiveness, none of Wordsworth's

contemporaries handled the measure with greater skill than Keats displayed in his fragmentary epic, *Hyperion.* This story of the fallen Grecian gods who reigned before Jupiter opens as follows:

> Deep in the shady sadness of a vale
> Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,
> Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,
> Sat gray-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone,
> Still as the silence round about his lair;
> Forest on forest hung about his head
> Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was there,
> Not so much life as on a summer's day
> Robs not one light seed from the feather'd grass,
> But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest.
> A stream went voiceless by, still deadened more
> By reason of his fallen divinity
> Spreading a shade: the Naiad 'mid her reeds
> Press'd her cold finger closer to her lips.

"There," says Professor Lowes, "if it ever was secured, is absolute truth of illusion, and flawless consistency of the imagery that creates it."

Walter Savage Landor, of whom we shall have more to say in the chapter on Light Verse, links the Romantic and Victorian poets. Although born in 1775, he lived to know and admire Robert Browning. The following poem contains a vivid and accurate characterization of Browning, who, like Landor, was then living in Italy. The number of poets, novelists, and dramatists who have found inspiration in Italy is very great. A visit to Italy or a residence there plays a large part in the lives of Chaucer, Milton, Byron, Shelley, Landor, the Brownings, Goethe, Lamartine, Ibsen, Hawthorne, Cooper, Howells, Samuel

Butler the novelist, and Henry James. The last line of Landor's poem contains an allusion to Mrs. Browning.

TO ROBERT BROWNING

There is delight in singing, tho' none hear
Beside the singer; and there is delight
In praising, tho' the praiser sit alone
And see the prais'd far off him, far above.
Shakespeare is not our poet, but the world's,
Therefore on him no speech! and brief for thee,
Browning! Since Chaucer was alive and hale,
No man hath walked along our roads with steps
So active, so inquiring eye, or tongue
So varied in discourse. But warmer climes
Give brighter plumage, stronger wing: the breeze
Of Alpine heights thou playest with, borne on
Beyond Sorrento and Amalfi, where
The Siren waits thee, singing song for song.

Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864)

Browning himself used blank verse very effectively in a number of his best poems and plays. His blank verse is essentially dramatic and conversational. Unfortunately, such poems as "Fra Lippo Lippi" and "Andrea del Sarto" are too long to quote here. So also are the blank verse poems of another great Victorian, Matthew Arnold, who uses the measure in "Balder Dead" and "Sohrab and Rustum."

No Victorian poet wrote better blank verse than Tennyson. His later poems, however, are usually regarded as inferior to those included in the 1842 volume which gave him his reputation. "Morte D'Arthur" probably marks the high-water mark of his poetry. The blank verse of the later *Idylls of the King* is more monotonous and

conventional. "Ulysses," another poem from the 1842 volume, illustrates Tennyson's use of blank verse at his best. The story of Ulysses comes, of course, ultimately from the *Odyssey;* but Tennyson found in Dante's *Divine Comedy* the episode with which he deals. The different uses made of the Homeric story by Dante and Tennyson illustrate clearly the difference between the medieval and the modern attitude toward the desire for knowledge. Homer, in the conventional fashion of romance, brings Ulysses home, after his twenty years of wars and wandering, to live happily ever after with his faithful wife and son. Dante represents the old warrior, dissatisfied with this tame existence, as calling up his sailors—in the *Odyssey* they had all died before Ulysses reached Ithaca —to make another voyage in quest of the unknown. They sail beyond the straits of Gibraltar out into the unexplored Atlantic, where they are all shipwrecked and drowned. Dante gives Ulysses a place in the *Inferno* because he had wanted to know things which no mortal should aspire to know. Tennyson, telling essentially the same story, gives it a distinctly modern interpretation. He makes his Ulysses the incarnation of the modern desire to know, which is largely the product of the scientific movement of Tennyson's own time. The mythological allusions should be looked up in a classical dictionary or in Gayley's *Classic Myths.*

ULYSSES

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole

Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees: all times I have enjoy'd
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vext the dim sea: I am become a name.
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known: cities of men,
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
Myself not least, but honour'd of them all;
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!
As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains: but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.

Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail:
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with me—
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil;
Death closes all: but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be the gulfs will wash us down:
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew;
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

Only a few American poets have used blank verse with entire success. Bryant, who, because of his nature poems

in blank verse, has often been called the American Wordsworth, uses this difficult measure better than any other American poet. His "Thanatopsis," "The Antiquity of Freedom," "A Forest Hymn," and "A Winter Piece" are all excellent. "The Prairies," from which we quote the opening paragraph, deserves mention as one of the few notable poetic attempts to picture the scenery of the great West.

These are the gardens of the Desert, these
The unshorn fields, boundless and beautiful,
For which the speech of England has no name—
The Prairies. I behold them for the first,
And my heart swells, while the dilated sight
Takes in the encircling vastness. Lo! they stretch,
In airy undulations, far away,
As if the ocean, in his gentlest swell,
Stood still, with all his rounded billows fixed,
And motionless forever.—Motionless?—
No—they are all unchained again. The clouds
Sweep over with their shadows, and, beneath,
The surface rolls and fluctuates to the eye;
Dark hollows seem to glide along and chase
The sunny ridges. Breezes of the South!
Who toss the golden and the flame-like flowers,
And pass the prairie-hawk that, poised on high,
Flaps his broad wings, yet moves not—ye have played
Among the palms of Mexico and vines
Of Texas, and have crisped the limpid brooks
That from the fountains of Sonora glide
Into the calm Pacific—have ye fanned
A nobler or a lovelier scene than this?
Man hath no power in all this glorious work:
The hand that built the firmament hath heaved
And smoothed these verdant swells, and sown their slopes

With herbage, planted them with island groves,
And hedged them round with forests. Fitting floor
For this magnificent temple of the sky—
With flowers whose glory and whose multitude
Rival the constellations! The great heavens
Seem to stoop down upon the scene in love,—
A nearer vault, and of a tenderer blue,
Than that which bends above our eastern hills.

The passage which has been quoted from Wordsworth is one of the rare descriptions of winter scenery to be found in British poetry. Only among the poets of wintry New England do we find many poems which describe the snow-covered landscape. One recalls Bryant's "A Winter Piece" and "The Little People of the Snow," Lowell's "The Vision of Sir Launfal," Whittier's "Snow-Bound," and Emerson's "The Snow-Storm."

THE SNOW-STORM

Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river, and the heaven,
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet
Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit
Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
In a tumultuous privacy of storm.

Come see the north wind's masonry.
Out of an unseen quarry evermore
Furnished with tile, the fierce artificer
Curves his white bastions with projected roof

Round every windward stake, or tree, or door.
Speeding, the myriad-handed, his wild work
So fanciful, so savage, nought cares he
For number or proportion. Mockingly
On coop or kennel he hangs Parian wreaths;
A swan-like form invests the hidden thorn;
Fills up the farmer's lane from wall to wall,
Maugre the farmer's sighs; and at the gate
A tapering turret overtops the work.
And when his hours are numbered, as he were not,
Leaves, when the sun appears, astonished Art
To mimic in slow structures, stone by stone,
Built in an age, the mad wind's night-work,
The frolic architecture of the snow.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

Most persons interested in present-day poetry seem unaware that blank verse is often used by living poets. William Butler Yeats's poetic dramas are written in blank verse of great beauty. Among living American poets, Edgar Lee Masters, Robert Frost, and Edwin Arlington Robinson frequently employ this long-established metrical form. The blank verse of Robinson's *Merlin* and *Lancelot* tempts comparison with that of *The Idylls of the King*; and, on the whole, it can hardly be said that Robinson's verse suffers from the comparison. We quote the opening lines of his superb portrait of Shakespeare, "Ben Jonson Entertains a Man from Stratford":

You are a friend then, as I make it out,
Of our man Shakespeare, who alone of us
Will put an ass's head in Fairyland
As he would add a shilling to more shillings,

All most harmonious,—and out of his
Miraculous inviolable increase
Fills Ilion, Rome, or any town you like
Of olden time with timeless Englishmen;
And I must wonder what you think of him—
All you down there where your small Avon flows
By Stratford, and where you're an Alderman.

The blank verse of Robert Frost, like that of Robinson, follows the rhythms of the human voice in actual speech. Frost's verse recalls the blank verse of Browning and of Shakespeare rather than that of Milton, Wordsworth, or Tennyson. Frost's poems are generally descriptions of New England rural life and scenery; they portray, however, not the New England of Emerson and Whittier, but rather the decadent, neurasthenic New England of Mary Wilkins Freeman and Alice Brown. These short story writers, and not the older poets, are Frost's true predecessors.

MENDING WALL

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made,
But at spring mending-time we find them there.
I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;

And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us once again.
We keep the wall between us as we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
We have to use a spell to make them balance:
"Stay where you are until our backs are turned!"
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.
Oh, just another kind of outdoor game,
One on a side. It comes to little more:
He is all pine and I am apple-orchard.
My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
He only says, "Good fences make good neighbors."
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
If I could put a notion in his head:
"*Why* do they make good neighbors? Isn't it
Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offence.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down!" I could say "Elves" to him,
But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
He said it for himself. I see him there,
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well
He says again, "Good fences make good neighbors."

Robert Frost (1875-)

Although blank verse is not so old as rimed verse, it is to be remembered that the oldest English poetry em-

ployed not rime but alliteration. Rime was introduced about the time of the Norman Conquest from the continent, where its use had become common in the Dark Ages. By the time of Chaucer's death in 1400, rime was thoroughly established in British poetry; and the old Anglo-Saxon alliterative measure was obsolete. The English language, however, is poorer in rimes than other European languages; and this fact has long been an argument for abandoning rime for blank verse or free verse. Dante, writing in Italian, a language in which rimes are plentiful, boasted that the exigencies of rime had never forced him to say either more or less than exactly what he intended to say. Milton, however, after using rime in his minor poems with consummate skill, abandoned this "troublesome and modern bondage of rhyming" as "the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter and lame metre," maintaining that the poets who had used rime had done so "much to their own vexation, hindrance, and constraint to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse, than else they would have expressed them."

There is more to be said for rime, however, than Milton admits; for blank verse and free verse, though they seem the easiest of all forms, are in reality the most difficult. Paradoxical as it may appear, poets, as a rule, succeed most often in those metrical forms which allow the least freedom. Wordsworth's sonnets are, on the whole, better than his blank verse. In blank verse, free verse, and the octosyllabic couplets of Scott and Byron there is a fatal facility which often prevents the poet from making his poem compact and concise. For this reason minor poets

have seldom succeeded so well with blank verse or free verse as with rime. In his "Ars Victrix" Austin Dobson, imitating the French poet Gautier, gives this advice to the poet:

O Poet, then, forbear
  The loosely-sandalled verse,
Choose rather thou to wear
  The buskin—strait and terse;

Leave to the tyro's hand
  The limp and shapeless style;
See that thy form demand
  The labour of the file.

Besides its most important purpose of binding the lines of a poem into the structural units which we call stanzas, rime has several valuable functions. It serves at the outset to differentiate a poem from prose; it helps to give us the right mood at the beginning. It is almost indispensable in lyric poetry; Tennyson's "Tears, Idle Tears" is almost the only successful blank verse lyric in the language. Rime, furthermore, supplies a partial substitute for the music which originally accompanied all poetry. The combined rimes of a stanza give something of the same effect as a chord in music. Rime often serves also to stress the most important words in the line. In Pope's poems the rime word is often balanced against another word within the line, as in

The *sound* must seem an echo to the *sense.*

To illustrate the different effects obtainable from prose, blank verse, and rime, we quote three separate translations of the opening paragraph of the *Iliad.* The first is

from the poetic, semi-biblical prose version of Lang, Leaf, and Myers:

Sing, goddess, the wrath of Achilles, Peleus' son, the ruinous wrath that brought on the Achaians woes innumerable, and hurled down into Hades many strong souls of heroes, and gave their bodies to be a prey to dogs and all winged fowls; and so the counsel of Zeus wrought out its accomplishment from the day when first strife parted Atreides, king of men, and noble Achilles.

The second version, in blank verse modeled on that of Milton, is by the Earl of Derby:

Of Peleus' son, Achilles, sing, O Muse,
The vengeance deep and deadly; whence to Greece
Unnumbered ills arose; which many a soul
Of mighty warriors to the viewless shades
Untimely sent; they on the battle plain
Unburied lay, a prey to rav'ning dogs,
And carrion birds; but so had Jove decreed,
From that sad day when first in wordy war,
The mighty Agamemnon, King of men,
Confronted stood by Peleus' godlike son.

The third version, in rimed couplets, is from the famous translation by Alexander Pope:

Achilles' wrath, to Greece the direful spring
Of woes unnumbered, heavenly Goddess, sing!
That wrath which hurled to Pluto's gloomy reign
The souls of mighty chiefs untimely slain:
Whose limbs, unburied on the naked shore,
Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore:
Since great Achilles and Atrides strove,
Such was the sovereign doom, and such the will of Jove.

The skilful poet selects that metrical form which is best suited to the expression of what he has to say. The

ballad stanza and the octosyllabic couplet are best adapted to stirring narrative. Blank verse, as we have seen, is best adapted to dramatic, epic, and reflective poetry. For satire, the poet prefers the heroic couplet or the ottava rima stanza; for a pensive theme, the heroic quatrain; and for painting a dream-picture, the Spenserian stanza. Each stanzaic form has a character of its own; and, in addition, it bears the impress of the personality of the poet who uses it. The personal equation, lacking in the folk-song and the popular ballad, enters in; and Keats's blank verse, in spite of the marked influence of Milton, can rarely be mistaken for that of *Paradise Lost*. The stanzaic forms which employ the iambic pentameter line are numerous, and the variety of effects which can be secured from varying the rimes is very large. We shall try to point out the fitness of the more important stanzaic forms to special purposes, and show also how different poets have adapted them to their own special ends.

The *heroic couplet* consists of two iambic pentameter lines riming in pairs, *aa*, *bb*, *cc*, etc. Occasionally a poem consists of only one couplet, as in Adelaide Crapsey's

ON SEEING WEATHER-BEATEN TREES

Is it as plainly in our living shown,
By slant and twist, which way the wind hath blown?
Adelaide Crapsey (1878-1914)

The heroic couplet, however, is ordinarily found only in longer poems; and, in spite of one or two striking ex-

ceptions, it is not suited to the lyric. Chaucer used it with great effect in his *Prologue* and in several of the *Canterbury Tales*. The opening paragraph of the *Prologue* well illustrates Chaucer's consummate mastery of the couplet. It should be noted that in Chaucer's time the English language contained many final *e*'s which are no longer pronounced. The larger proportion of vowels to consonants made Middle English almost as musical a language as Italian. The *e*'s which Chaucer pronounced are indicated thus: *è*. The vowels should be pronounced as in French or Latin. *Whan* is when; *soote*, sweet; *swich*, such; *sonne*, sun; *y-ronne*, run; *fowles*, birds; *ye*, eye; *corages*, hearts; *seken*, seek; *strondes*, strands; *ferne halwes*, distant shrines; *couthe*, known; *hir*, their; *than*, then; *hem*, them; *seke*, seek and sick.

Whan that Aprillè with his shourès sootè
The droghte of Marche hath percèd to the rootè,
And bathèd every veyne in swich licour,
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his swetè breeth
Inspirèd hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppès, and the yongè sonnè
Hath in the Ram his halfè cours y-ronnè,
And smalè fowlès maken melodyè,
That slepen al the night with open yè,
(So priketh hem nature in hir coragès):
Than longen folk to goon on pilgrimagès,
And palmers for to seken straungè strondès,
To fernè halwès, couthe in sondry londès;
And specially, from every shirès endè
Of Engelond, to Caunterbury they wendè,
The holy blissful martir for to sekè,
That hem hath holpen whan that they were sekè.

Marlowe employed the heroic couplet in his *Hero and Leander*, and Shakespeare used it frequently, in his early plays, for the closing lines of his scenes. Since the close of the Elizabethan age, two distinct types of the couplet have developed. The first, used by Dryden, Pope, and their followers, is really a stanza, although they always printed their lines continuously. In the "closed" couplet, as it is called, each couplet is a thought unit. There is almost invariably a marked pause at the end of the second line and usually one at the end of the first line as well. The typical "closed" couplet is illustrated by Pope's pithy lines,

> True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
> As those move easiest who have learned to dance.

In the "open" couplet, much used by the Romantic poets, the movement, as in blank verse, is continuous. The pauses usually occur in the middle of the line, seldom at the end.

Pope's period has been called the Age of Prose and Reason. At that time even poetry concerned itself with subjects now generally considered proper for treatment only in prose. The very titles of his poems, *An Essay on Criticism*, *An Essay on Man*, *Moral Essays*, suggest prose rather than verse. Pope's poetry belongs to the literature of knowledge rather than to the literature of power, of reason rather than of imagination. Seldom have later poets rivaled Pope and Dryden in epigrammatic point, in keenness of wit, in brilliant satire, or in technical dexterity. The heroic couplet, as they use it, is admirably adapted to these ends. Later critics have fre-

quently denied these verses any poetic merit; but whether poetry or not, the "poems" are certainly literature. Dryden in his "Lines Printed under the Engraved Portrait of Milton" ranks Milton above both Vergil and Homer. We have here printed each couplet as a separate stanza to indicate the independent character of each "closed" couplet.

Three poets, in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn.

The first in loftiness of thought surpassed,
The next in majesty, in both the last.

The force of Nature could no farther go;
To make the third she joined the former two.

In the extract quoted from Wordsworth's *The Prelude*, we noted that the poet contrives to suggest the motions of the skaters by the movement of his lines. Many striking examples of onomatopœia are found in Tennyson. The following line from "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After" is said to have been his favorite line,

Universal ocean softly washing all her warless isles.

Another much quoted passage is from *The Princess*,

The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees.

Perhaps the cleverest use of onomatopœia is found in Pope's *Essay on Criticism:*

'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,
The sound must seem an echo to the sense.
Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,

And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;
But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,
The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar.
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too labours, and the words move slow;
Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the main.

The Romantic poets rebelled against the poetic conventions of Pope's time in much the same manner as living poets have rebelled against the practices of the Victorian poets. The Romanticists either discarded the heroic couplet or handled it in an entirely different manner. The following passage from Keats's "Sleep and Poetry" illustrates both the Romantic use of the couplet and the revolt against Pope's conception of poetry. The movement of the "open" couplet is not stanzaic but continuous; the pauses occur chiefly inside the line and the rime words are often unstressed.

A schism
Nurtured by foppery and barbarism,
Made great Apollo blush for this his land.
Men were thought wise who could not understand
His glories: with a puling infant's force
They swayed about upon a rocking horse,
And thought it Pegasus. Ah dismal souled!
The winds of heaven blew: the ocean rolled
Its gathering waves—ye felt it not. The blue
Bared its eternal bosom, and the dew
Of summer nights collected still to make
The morning precious: beauty was awake!
Why were ye not awake? But ye were dead
To things ye knew not of,—were closely wed
To musty laws lined out with wretched rule

And compass vile: so that ye taught a school
Of dolts to smooth, inlay, and clip, and fit,
Till, like the certain wands of Jacob's wit,
Their verses tallied. Easy was the task!
A thousand handicraftsmen wore the mask
Of Poesy. Ill-fated, impious race!
That blasphemed the bright Lyrist to his face,
And did not know it.

The heroic couplet is not often found in Victorian poetry. Browning sometimes used it very effectively in the manner of the Romantic poets. So continuous is the movement of the verse in "My Last Duchess" that one may easily mistake it for blank verse. "My Last Duchess" is perhaps the finest example of the dramatic monologue, a type of poem which Browning made famous. Much of Browning's alleged obscurity is due to a failure to understand this type of poetry. The reader has doubtless listened to a friend talking over the telephone, and tried to piece out the whole conversation from the half which he overhears. In the dramatic monologue the situation is precisely the same; we hear only one of the speakers. In "My Last Duchess" the speaker is an Italian nobleman who is showing a picture of his first wife to a messenger from the count whose daughter the speaker proposes to make his second wife. The fifty-six lines of the poem paint memorable pictures of two characters and reveal much of the spirit of Renaissance life in Italy.

MY LAST DUCHESS

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's hands

Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said
"Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 't was not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps
Frà Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat": such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed: she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 't was all one! My favor at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace—all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men,—good! but thanked
Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech—(which I have not)—to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this
Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let

Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
—E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together. There she stands
As if alive. Will 't please you rise? We'll meet
The company below, then. I repeat,
The Count your master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretence
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me!

Robert Browning (1812-1889)

Poets of today use the heroic couplet oftener than a casual reader would suppose from the manner in which older metrical forms are condemned. We may mention Masefield's "Biography" and "Ships," Rupert Brooke's "The Great Lover," and Robert Frost's "The Tuft of Flowers."

THE TUFT OF FLOWERS

I went to turn the grass once after one
Who mowed it in the dew before the sun.

The dew was gone that made his blade so keen
Before I came to view the levelled scene.

I looked for him behind an isle of trees;
I listened for his whetstone on the breeze.

But he had gone his way, the grass all mown,
And I must be, as he had been,—alone,

"As all must be," I said within my heart,
"Whether they work together or apart."

But as I said it, swift there passed me by
On noiseless wing a bewildered butterfly,

Seeking with memories grown dim over night
Some resting flower of yesterday's delight.

And once I marked his flight go round and round,
As where some flower lay withering on the ground.

And then he flew as far as eye could see,
And then on tremulous wing came back to me.

I thought of questions that have no reply,
And would have turned to toss the grass to dry;

But he turned first, and led my eye to look
At a tall tuft of flowers beside a brook,

A leaping tongue of bloom the scythe had spared
Beside a reedy brook the scythe had bared.

I left my place to know them by their name,
Finding them butterfly-weed when I came.

The mower in the dew had loved them thus,
By leaving them to flourish, not for us,

Nor yet to draw one thought of ours to him,
But from sheer morning gladness at the brim.

The butterfly and I had lit upon,
Nevertheless, a message from the dawn,

That made me hear the wakening birds around,
And hear his long scythe whispering to the ground,

And feel a spirit kindred to my own;
So that henceforth I worked no more alone;

But glad with him, I worked as with his aid,
And weary, sought at noon with him the shade;

And dreaming, as it were, held brotherly speech
With one whose thought I had not hoped to reach.

"Men work together," I told him from the heart,
"Whether they work together or apart."

Robert Frost (1875-)

The *heroic quatrain*, as it is usually called, is a stanza of four iambic pentameter lines riming *abab*. The form has never been frequently used in English or American poetry, but in it a few of the greatest poems have been written. The rime scheme produces an effect radically different from that of the epigrammatic, staccato movement of the heroic couplet. It is best adapted to thoughtful, often melancholy moods; its rhythm is slower and statelier than that of the couplet. An excellent illustration of the different effects to be obtained from the two forms is found in the Shakespearean sonnet, which consists of three heroic quatrains followed by a concluding couplet. The last two lines of the sonnet bring a change in the thought, a contrast or a summary; and the change in the rime scheme emphasizes the change in thought.

Both quatrain and couplet effects are skilfully combined in several of the stanzaic forms discussed later in this chapter.

The most famous of all poems in the heroic quatrain is Thomas Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard." This poem, it should be noted, is not, strictly speaking, an elegy at all, for, unlike Milton's "Lycidas" and Shelley's "Adonais," it is not a lament occasioned by the death of a particular person. The heroic quatrain has been called the elegiac stanza because of its supposed resemblance to the Latin elegiac couplet. Both the ancient and the modern form are well adapted to reflective poetry. In Gray's time melancholy was the poetic fashion. Milton's "Il Penseroso" was a favorite, and it set the mood for the so-called "Graveyard School" of poets, which included Collins, Blair, Young, and Gray. Bryant's "Thanatopsis" and "Hymn to Death" are the American representatives of this melancholy type of poetry.

As poems which both the average reader and the critic alike consider great, Gray's "Elegy" and Poe's "The Raven" are almost unrivaled. At the same time, it must be admitted that critics have frequently preferred the less known poems of both Gray and Poe. The "Elegy" is not a great poem because of any profound or original idea which it expresses, for every thoughtful man and woman who has visited a cemetery has had the same thoughts. The poem is great because Gray has given to thoughts common to all men the finest artistic expression which they have yet found.

The chief defect to be found in the "Elegy" is the oc-

casional use of a hackneyed poetic diction. Eighteenth century poets disliked to call a spade a spade; they were much more likely to call it a garden implement. *Swain* and *glebe* for man and soil are examples. The concluding epitaph, intended for the poet himself, is inferior to the remainder of the poem and detracts somewhat from its unity of tone. *Provoke*, in the eleventh stanza, is used in the Latin sense of call forth. In the ninth stanza, which is often misquoted, *hour* is not the object but the subject of *awaits;* "the inevitable hour," or death, waits in ambush.

ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tow'r
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such, as wand'ring near her secret bow'r,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,

Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude Forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,
The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye Proud, impute to These the fault,
If Memory o'er their Tomb no Trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?

Can Honor's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little Tyrant of his fields withstood;
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

The applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade: nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confin'd;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,

Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet even these bones from insult to protect,
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their names, their years, spelt by the unlettered muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply:
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
Ev'n from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted Fires.

For thee, who mindful of the unhonored Dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate,
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred Spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed Swain may say,
"Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn

Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

"There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove,
Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

"One morn I missed him on the customed hill,
Along the heath and near his favorite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

"The next with dirges due in sad array
Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne.
Approach and read (for thou can'st read) the lay,
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn:"

THE EPITAPH

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
A Youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown.
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heav'n did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to Mis'ry all he had, a tear,
He gain'd from Heav'n ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose)
The bosom of his Father and his God.
Thomas Gray (1716-1771)

Gray was one of the most careful artists who ever wrote in verse. He worked on the "Elegy" intermittently for seven years, and published it at last only to prevent its being inaccurately printed by an unscrupulous bookseller. Poe, in "The Philosophy of Composition," states that if he could have written any better stanzas than that which marks the climax of "The Raven," he would "without scruple, have purposely enfeebled them, so as not to interfere with the climacteric effect." Gray discarded as unsuitable several stanzas which are as beautiful as many which he used. The first of the following omitted stanzas came after the eighteenth stanza, and the second immediately before the epitaph:

Hark how the sacred Calm, that broods around,
Bids ev'ry fierce tumultuous Passion cease,
In still small Accents whisp'ring from the Ground
A grateful Earnest of eternal Peace.

There scatter'd oft the earliest of the year
By hands unseen are frequent Violets found;
The Robin loves to build and warble there,
And little Footsteps lightly print the Ground.

Though never widely used, the heroic quatrain seems to be employed as frequently today as it has ever been. Three of Masefield's best poems, "August, 1914," "The River," and "The 'Wanderer,' " are written in this stanza.

Vachel Lindsay and Edwin Arlington Robinson also use it with great skill. Sometimes, as in the following poem, they omit the rime in the first and third lines of each stanza. In this poem, as in his "Richard Cory," Robinson departs widely from the traditional use of this measure. It is astonishing what novel effects he obtains from the stately pensive stanza of the "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard."

MR. FLOOD'S PARTY

Old Eben Flood, climbing alone one night
Over the hill between the town below
And the forsaken upland hermitage
That held as much as he should ever know
On earth again of home, paused warily.
The road was his with not a native near;
And Eben, having leisure, said aloud,
For no man else in Tilbury Town to hear:

"Well, Mr. Flood, we have the harvest moon
Again, and we may not have many more;
The bird is on the wing, the poet says,
And you and I have said it here before.
Drink to the bird." He raised up to the light
The jug that he had gone so far to fill,
And answered huskily: "Well, Mr. Flood,
Since you propose it, I believe I will."

Alone, as if enduring to the end
A valiant armor of scarred hopes outworn,
He stood there in the middle of the road
Like Roland's ghost winding a silent horn.
Below him, in the town among the trees,
Where friends of other days had honored him,

A phantom salutation of the dead
Rang thinly till old Eben's eyes were dim.

Then, as a mother lays her sleeping child
Down tenderly, fearing it may awake,
He set the jug down slowly at his feet
With trembling care, knowing that most things break;
And only when assured that on firm earth
It stood, as the uncertain lives of men
Assuredly did not, he paced away,
And with his hand extended paused again:

"Well, Mr. Flood, we have not met like this
In a long time; and many a change has come
To both of us, I fear, since last it was
We had a drop together. Welcome home!"
Convivially returning with himself,
Again he raised the jug up to the light;
And with an acquiescent quaver said:
"Well, Mr. Flood, if you insist, I might.

"Only a very little, Mr. Flood—
For auld lang syne. No more, sir; that will do."
So, for the time, apparently it did,
And Eben evidently thought so too;
For soon amid the silver loneliness
Of night he lifted up his voice and sang,
Secure, with only two moons listening,
Until the whole harmonious landscape rang—

"For auld lang syne." The weary throat gave out,
The last word wavered; and the song being done,
He raised again the jug regretfully
And shook his head, and was again alone.
There was not much that was ahead of him,
And there was nothing in the town below—

Where strangers would have shut the many doors
That many friends had opened long ago.
Edwin Arlington Robinson (1869-)

In his paraphrase of a Persian poem, *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*, Edward Fitzgerald has made famous another four-line stanza, which rimes *aaba*. The popularity of the *Rubáiyát* in its day was due in part to a second vogue of melancholy poetry in the last half of the nineteenth century. We quote a few of the best stanzas:

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling:
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing. . . .

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow! . . .

Oh, my Belovèd, fill the Cup that clears
To-day of past Regret and future Fears:
To-morrow!—Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n thousand Years. . . .

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it. . . .

And those who husbanded the Golden grain,
And those who flung it to the winds like Rain,
Alike to no such aureate Earth are turn'd
As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

The eight-line stanza known as *ottava rima,* riming *abababcc,* is more common in Italian, from which it was borrowed, than in English. The form is best adapted to satire; admirable examples are Byron's "Beppo," "The Vision of Judgment," and *Don Juan.* Whittier's "Ichabod" and Browning's "The Lost Leader" contain no more scathing denunciation than "The Vision of Judgment," in which Byron expresses his opinion of Robert Southey and George III.

In the first year of freedom's second dawn
  Died George the Third; although no tyrant, one
Who shielded tyrants, till each sense withdrawn
  Left him nor mental nor external sun;
A better farmer ne'er brush'd dew from lawn,
  A worse king never left a realm undone!
He died—but left his subjects still behind,
One half as mad—and t'other no less blind.

He died! his death made no great stir on earth:
  His burial made some pomp; there was profusion
Of velvet, gilding, brass, and no great dearth
  Of aught save tears—save those shed by collusion.
For these things may be bought at their true worth;
  Of elegy there was the due infusion—
Bought also; and the torches, cloaks, and banners,
Heralds, and relics of old Gothic manners

Form'd a sepulchral melodrame. Of all
  The fools who flock'd to swell or see the show,
Who cared about the corpse? The funeral
  Made the attraction, and the black the woe.
There throbb'd not there a thought which pierced the pall;
  And when the gorgeous coffin was laid low,

It seem'd the mockery of hell to fold
The rottenness of eighty years in gold.

The *rime royal* stanza, in seven lines riming *ababbcc*, owes its name—so it is said—to the fact that King James I of Scotland, a poetic follower of Chaucer, used it. Chaucer himself, for whom the stanza should have been named, used it with consummate skill in his *Troilus*, *The Parliament of Fowls*, and in several of the *Canterbury Tales*. Notable poems employing the rime royal stanza are Shakespeare's *Lucrece* and Wordsworth's "Resolution and Independence." In more recent times the stanza has been frequently used by two ardent admirers of Chaucer—William Morris and John Masefield. Morris prefixed the following poem to *The Earthly Paradise*.

AN APOLOGY

Of Heaven or Hell I have no power to sing,
I cannot ease the burden of your fears,
Or make quick-coming death a little thing,
Or bring again the pleasure of past years,
Nor for my words shall ye forget your tears,
Or hope again, for aught that I can say,
The idle singer of an empty day.

But rather, when aweary of your mirth,
From full hearts still unsatisfied ye sigh
And, feeling kindly unto all the earth,
Grudge every minute as it passes by,
Made the more mindful that the sweet days die—
—Remember me a little then, I pray,
The idle singer of an empty day.

The heavy trouble, the bewildering care
That weighs us down who live and earn our bread
These idle verses have no power to bear;
So let me sing of names rememberèd,
Because they, living not, can ne'er be dead,
Or long time take their memory quite away
From us poor singers of an empty day.

Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due time,
Why should I strive to set the crooked straight?
Let it suffice me that my murmuring rhyme
Beats with light wing against the ivory gate,
Telling a tale not too importunate
To those who in the sleepy region stay,
Lulled by the singer of an empty day.

Folk say, a wizard to a northern king
At Christmas-tide such wondrous things did show
That through one window men beheld the spring,
And through another saw the summer glow,
And through a third the fruited vines a-row,
While still, unheard, but in its wonted way,
Piped the drear wind of that December day.

So with this Earthly Paradise it is,
If ye will read aright, and pardon me,
Who strive to build a shadowy isle of bliss
Midmost the beating of the steely sea,
Where tossed about all hearts of men must be;
Whose ravening monsters mighty men shall slay,
Not the poor singer of an empty day.

William Morris (*1834-1896*)

John Masefield uses rime royal in *Dauber*, *The Widow in the Bye Street*, and *The Daffodil Fields*. Although Masefield received his poetic inspiration from

Chaucer, his use of rime royal has little of the Chaucerian melody and charm which Morris often recaptured; in fact, the stanza gives an entirely different effect, that of vividness and power. We quote the opening stanzas of *The Widow in the Bye Street:*

Down Bye Street, in a little Shropshire town,
There lived a widow with her only son:
She had no wealth nor title to renown,
Nor any joyous hours, never one.
She rose from ragged mattress before sun
And stitched all day until her eyes were red,
And had to stitch, because her man was dead.

Sometimes she fell asleep, she stitched so hard,
Letting the linen fall upon the floor;
And hungry cats would steal in from the yard,
And mangy chickens pecked about the door,
Craning their necks so ragged and so sore
To search the room for bread-crumbs, or for mouse
But they got nothing in the widow's house.

Mostly she made her bread by hemming shrouds
For one rich undertaker in the High Street,
Who used to pray that folks might die in crowds
And that their friends might pay to let them lie sweet;
And when one died the widow in the Bye Street
Stitched night and day to give the worm his dole.
The dead were better dressed than that poor soul.

The *Spenserian stanza*, named for Edmund Spenser, who first used it in *The Faërie Queene*, is the most stately and impressive stanzaic form in English poetry. It consists of nine lines riming *ababbcbcc*. Its rime scheme is identical with the first nine lines of the Spenserian sonnet. The ninth line, which contains six feet and is called an

Alexandrine, gives a full round close to the stanza. Some of the greatest poems in English have been written in this exceedingly difficult measure, although it has been little used during the past hundred years. From *The Faërie Queene*, we quote the stanzas which describe the abode of Morpheus, the god of sleep. No finer example of onomatopœia can be found in English poetry. *Of nothing he takes keep* means he pays no attention to anything.

He, making speedy way through 'spersèd air,
And through the world of waters wide and deep,
To Morpheus' house doth hastily repair.
Amid the bowels of the earth full steep,
And low, where dawning day doth never peep,
His dwelling is; there Tethys his wet bed
Doth ever wash, and Cynthia still doth steep
In silver dew his ever-drooping head,
Whiles sad Night over him her mantle black doth spread.

Whose double gates he findeth lockèd fast,
The one fair framed of burnished ivory,
The other all with silver overcast;
And wakeful dogs before them far do lie,
Watching to banish Care, their enemy,
Who oft is wont to trouble gentle Sleep.
By them the sprite doth pass in quietly,
And unto Morpheus comes, whom drownèd deep
In drowsy fit he finds: of nothing he takes keep.

And more to lull him in his slumber soft,
A trickling stream from high rock tumbling down,
And ever-drizzling rain upon the loft,
Mixed with a murmuring wind much like the soun'
Of swarming bees, did cast him in a swoon.

No other noise, nor people's troublous cries,
As still are wont t' annoy the wallèd town,
Might there be heard; but careless Quiet lies
Wrapped in eternal silence far from enemies.

The messenger approaching to him spake;
But his waste words returned to him in vain:
So sound he slept that nought mought him awake.
Then rudely he him thrust, and pushed with pain,
Whereat he 'gan to stretch; but he again
Shook him so hard that forcèd him to speak.
As one then in a dream, whose drier brain
Is tossed with troubled sights and fancies weak,
He mumbled soft, but would not all his silence break.

James Thomson, a Scottish poet of the early eighteenth century, was a forerunner of the Romantic poets. His *Seasons* is one of the earliest of nature poems. Though a contemporary of Pope, Thomson wrote not in the almost universally used heroic couplet, but in Miltonic blank verse and the Spenserian stanza. The following passage from his *Castle of Indolence* is an excellent example of onomatopœia. The language is archaic in imitation of Spenser. *Drowsy-head* means drowsiness; *eke*, also; and *noyance*, annoyance.

A pleasing land of drowsy-head it was:
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye;
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
Forever flushing round a summer-sky.
There eke the soft delights, that witchingly
Instil a wanton sweetness through the breast,
And the calm pleasures, always hovered nigh;
But whate'er smackt of noyance, or unrest,
Was far, far off expelled from this delicious nest.

After *The Faërie Queene*, the two greatest poems in the Spenserian stanza are probably Keats's "Eve of St. Agnes" and Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. We quote the opening and closing stanzas of Keats's poem. Seldom do we find a poem which so well strikes the right note in the opening line and sustains it to the very end.

St. Agnes' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was!
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;
The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass,
And silent was the flock in woolly fold:
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
Like pious incense from a censer old,
Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death,
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith. . . .

And they are gone: ay, ages long ago
These lovers fled away into the storm.
That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,
And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form
Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,
Were long be-nightmar'd. Angela the old
Died palsy-twitch'd, with meagre face deform;
The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,
For aye unsought for slept among his ashes cold.

Byron's use of the Spenserian stanza differs greatly from Spenser's. He gives the measure a power and sweep which compensate for the melody and finish which his poetry lacks. Byron's verse is singularly uneven. Some of the following lines are poor, and one is actually ungrammatical; but the other lines are almost perfect of their kind. We quote the apostrophe to the Ocean,

probably the greatest of all the many fine passages in English poetry which deal with the sea.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
I love not man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray,
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth—there let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,

The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war;
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride, or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters washed them power while they were free,
And many a tyrant since: their shores obey
The stranger, slave or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou,
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests: in all time,
Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving;—boundless, endless, and sublime—
The image of Eternity—the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeys thee; thou goest forth dread, fathomless, alone.

In *terza rima*, the difficult measure used by Dante in the *Divine Comedy*, the lines are grouped in divisions of three so that the middle rime of one stanza becomes the initial rime of the next. Each section of the poem closes with a couplet. As the stanzas are all interlocked by rime, the movement is not stanzaic but continuous, as in blank verse. Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind" is one of the greatest of longer English lyrics. The west wind

is the Italian autumn wind which brings rain. At the time the poem was written, Shelley, then living in Italy, was perhaps the most unpopular poet of his day.

ODE TO THE WEST WIND

I

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odors plain and hill;

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and preserver; hear, Oh hear!

II

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning: there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Maenad, even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapors, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst: Oh hear!

III

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystàlline streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baiae's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

All overgrown with azure moss and flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves: Oh hear!

IV

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed
Scarce seemed a vision; I would ne'er have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

v

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!
And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O, wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

Percy Bysshe Shelley (*1792-1822*)

The ode may be defined as a lyric poem, longer than the song, which handles a lofty theme in a dignified and impressive manner. There are as to metrical form, three kinds of odes: regular, irregular, and stanzaic. The regular ode is written in imitation of the Greek ode. It consists of divisions known as strophes, antistrophes, and epodes. These terms allude to the positions assumed by the singers of the ode. All the strophes must have exactly the same metrical structure; so also with the epodes and the antistrophes. Since, however, the music of Pindar's odes is lost, Cowley and other English poets came to imagine that the structure of the Greek ode was absolutely irregular. Hence arose the irregular, or Cowleyan, ode. Examples of this type are Dryden's "Alexander's Feast" and Wordsworth's "Ode: Intimations of Immortality." Gray's "The Progress of Poesy" is an excellent example of the regular ode. In the nineteenth century several great odes, like those of Keats, have been written in stanzaic forms.

As in the case of free verse, the rimed poem which has no regular structure has been much attacked. In each case the line of defence is the same. The Italian critic Croce and the Imagist poets of today tell us that every poetic idea demands its own special form. In his article on *Poetry* in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Theodore Watts-Dunton pointed out the principle underlying the seeming lawlessness of such irregular poems as Milton's "Lycidas," Poe's "The Bells," and Coleridge's "Kubla Khan":

"In modern prosody the arrangement of the rhymes

and the length of the lines in any rhymed metrical passage may be determined either by a fixed stanzaic law, or by a law infinitely deeper—by the law which impels the soul, in a state of poetic exaltation, to seize hold of every kind of metrical aid, such as rhyme, cæsura, etc., for the purpose of accentuating and marking off each shade of emotion as it arises, regardless of any demands of stanza. . . . If a metrical passage does not gain immensely by being written independently of stanzaic law, it loses immensely. . . . In the regular metres we enjoy the pleasure of feeling that the rhymes will inevitably fall under a recognized law of couplet or stanza. But if the passage flows independently of these, it must still flow inevitably—it must, in short, show that it is governed by another and a yet deeper force, the inevitableness of emotional expression."

Watts-Dunton considered "Kubla Khan" the most perfect of irregular poems in English, but he thought Wordsworth's "Ode: Intimations of Immortality" the greatest of all English odes in spite of the fact that certain passages do not possess complete harmony between idea and metrical form.

Changes in science soon render scientific writings obsolete—Sir Isaac Newton gives place to Einstein;—but the obsolete philosophy and psychology on which Wordsworth builded do not materially affect the value of his great ode to us. Although a philosopher of today would give different reasons for a belief in personal immortality, Wordsworth's ode has a permanent value which changes in philosophy and psychology are powerless to affect. In

fairness to the poet, however, it should be said that Wordsworth did not mean literally to advocate the Platonic belief that the soul exists before birth.

ODE

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

I

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore;—
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

II

The Rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the Rose,
The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare,
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,

To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong:
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every Beast keep holiday;—
Thou Child of Joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
Shepherd-boy!

IV

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
Oh evil day! if I were sullen
While Earth herself is adorning,
This sweet May-morning,
And the Children are culling
On every side,
In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,
And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm:—
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
—But there's a Tree, of many, one,
A single Field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone:

The Pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat:
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And, even with something of a Mother's mind,
And no unworthy aim,
The homely Nurse doth all she can
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' Darling of a pigmy size!
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his father's eyes!
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learnèd art;
A wedding or a festival,
A mourning or a funeral;
And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song:
Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
But it will not be long
Ere this be thrown aside,
And with new joy and pride
The little Actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
That Life brings with her in her equipage;
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

VIII

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy Soul's immensity;
Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—
Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
On whom those truths do rest

Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by;
Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

IX

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!
The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest—
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realised,
High instincts before which our mortal Nature
Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised:

But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be,
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the Children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

x

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young Lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound!
We in thought will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May!
What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find

Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
Forbode not any severing of our loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
I only have relinquished one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;
The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
Is lovely yet;
The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

William Wordsworth (*1770-1850*)

CHAPTER VI

THE BALLAD

I knew a very wise man that believed that . . . if a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation.

Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun

The ballad, unlike the song, is not lyric but narrative. It is not the expression of a poet's mood or emotion, but the story of a bold deed, a dramatic incident, a chase, or a fight. In the lyric the poet tries to express his own feelings as completely as possible; in the ballad he effaces himself in order that his characters may occupy the front of the stage.

The ballad is the short story of poetry; yet, unlike the prose short story, which of all the important literary types is the youngest, the ballad is among the most ancient. Only the folk-song is equally old. The ballad is older than the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey;* in fact, these epics had their beginnings in the ballad. The merits of a good ballad are much the same as those of the prose short story. The characters and incidents must be interesting; and the story must be vivid, spirited, full of movement and action. The brevity of the ballad, however, compels its author to select a simpler story and to tell it more directly and more rapidly than he would tell

it in prose. The limitations of poetic language, moreover, force him to suggest rather than describe in detail his characters and his background.

Ballads are of two distinct types: the popular, or folk, ballad; and the literary, or artistic, ballad. The literary ballad is the work of one author, a known individual; the popular ballad is the work of unknown authors, so numerous and so obscure that we call it the work of the people. The popular ballad is much the older of the two types; and it is often, as we shall presently see, the inspiration of the literary ballad.

In the earliest stage the popular ballad appears to have been, like the folk-song, always chanted or sung, often perhaps to the accompaniment of a dance. Traces of this connection of the ballad with music are to be seen in the choruses and refrains which some of the ballads preserve. Just how the ballads were composed, we do not know; and authorities disagree rather violently. The orthodox theory is that they were composed by a singing, dancing group. Professor Louise Pound, of the University of Nebraska, has attacked this theory in her interesting *Poetic Origins and the Ballad*. Her theory is that the ballads were written by individual authors, as in later poetry. However the ballads may have been originally composed, there is no doubt that they owe their chief stylistic characteristics to the way in which they have been handed down. Every one who has played the old game of Gossip knows that few persons can accurately repeat a verbal message of any length. One word or phrase replaces another until, by the time the sentence has gone round the circle, it seldom bears any resem-

blance to the original message. The popular ballads have been handed down from generation to generation without being written down. Consequently, so many changes have crept into them that nearly all individual traces of the original author—if, indeed, the ballad was ever the work of one man—have vanished. The ballad has taken on something from all who have repeated it; so that we may truthfully say it is the work not of one man but of the people. The style of the popular ballad, as a result of this process of transmission, is impersonal, simple, and direct. The ballad rings true because it is the poem of a race and not the unrepresentative work of one man.

The popular ballads are poetry of the people, by the people, and for the people; they belong to a time when all people loved poetry. They are the work of those who had no other literature. American cowboys, miners, lumbermen, and mountaineers, cut off from books, newspapers, and theaters, have composed or borrowed ballads, set them to old airs, and sung them. The ballads of the Scottish border originated doubtless in much the same way. Such primitive poetry often possesses the power of pleasing even the cultivated reader. Of the ballad of "Chevy Chase" the scholarly Sir Philip Sidney wrote, "I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas, that I found not my heart more moved than with a trumpet." Over a century later Addison wrote of the same ballad, "It is impossible that anything should be universally tasted and approved by a multitude, though they are the rabble of a nation, which hath not in it some peculiar aptness to please and gratify the mind of man."

When the people in isolated districts come into contact

with a higher civilization, they gradually give up their splendid ballads for songs of a very inferior kind. Thus, in our own country, the cowboys and the negroes are giving up such ballads as "Joe Bowser" and "Frankie was a Good Woman" for worthless songs from the vaudeville stage. In the same way some of the finest of the old British ballads have been irrecoverably lost. In England there was little interest in ballad-collecting until Bishop Percy published in 1765 his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. Percy's collection enormously stimulated the interest of scholars and poets in this poetry of the people. Since his time many of the great English poets,—among them Scott, Wordsworth, Keats, Rossetti, and Kipling,—have found in the old ballads inspiration for literary ballads of great merit.

The popular ballad tells its story with the smallest possible amount of description and characterization. As in the drama, the characters reveal themselves by what they say and do. In the following ballad, "Lord Randal," none of the three characters is described, and the sweetheart is not even present ;yet mother, son, and sweetheart all stand clearly revealed in the dialogue between mother and son. The mother's—and the reader's—suspicions are gradually aroused, but not until the last stanza is the tragic event made clear. With this climax the poem closes, at just the right moment and with exactly the right emphasis. This ballad, though it seems to have originated in England or Scotland, has also been found in various parts of America. The word *down* is here pronounced so as to rime with *soon*. The ballad is written in anapestic tetrameter couplets.

LORD RANDAL

"O where ha'e ye been, Lord Randal, my son?
O where ha'e ye been, my handsome young man?"
"I ha'e been to the wildwood; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain would lie down."

"Where gat ye your dinner, Lord Randal, my son?
Where gat ye your dinner, my handsome young man?"
"I dined wi' my true-love; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain would lie down."

"What gat ye to your dinner, Lord Randal, my son?
What gat ye to your dinner, my handsome young man?"
"I gat eels boiled in brew; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain would lie down."

"What became of your bloodhounds, Lord Randal my son?
What became of your bloodhounds, my handsome young man?"
"O they swelled and they died; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain would lie down."

"O I fear ye are poisoned, Lord Randal, my son!
O I fear ye are poisoned, my handsome young man!"
"O yes, I am poisoned; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain would lie down."

This ballad is in some respects so crude as to seem ridiculous, but it was not meant to be humorous. A better ballad is the old Scotch ballad of "The Twa Corbies," or the two ravens. A great poet would find it difficult to give more effectively the impression of complete desertion in which the knight dies. The reader will bear in mind that Scottish *a*, *ai*, and *au* generally represent English *o*. *T'ane* means the one; *t'ither*, the other;

theek, thatch or line; *gowden*, golden; *gang*, go; *sall*, shall; *ae*, a or one.

THE TWA CORBIES

As I was walking all alane,
I heard twa corbies making a mane;
The tane unto the t'ither say,
"Where sall we gang and dine to-day?"

"In behint yon auld fail dyke,
I wot there lies a new slain knight;
And naebody kens that he lies there,
But his hawk, his hound, and lady fair.

"His hound is to the hunting gane,
His hawk to fetch the wild-fowl hame,
His lady's ta'en another mate,
So we may mak our dinner sweet.

"Ye'll sit on his white hause-bane,
And I'll pike out his bonny blue een;
Wi' ae lock o' his gowden hair
We'll theek our nest when it grows bare.

"Mony a one for him makes mane,
But nane sall ken where he is gane;
O'er his white banes, when they are bare,
The wind sall blaw for evermair."

Perhaps the best of all the British popular ballads is the one which Coleridge referred to as "The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spence." The poem is written in what is known as the ballad stanza, although extra unaccented syllables are often found. *Yestreen* means yes-

terday evening; *shoon*, shoes; *aboon*, above; *kems*, combs; *half owre*, halfway over. It should be noted that in the Scottish dialect the relative pronoun is frequently omitted when it cannot be dropped in English.

SIR PATRICK SPENS

The king sits in Dumferling town,
  Drinking the blood-red wine:
"O whar will I get guid sailor,
  To sail this ship of mine?"

Up and spak' an eldern knicht,
  Sat at the king's right knee:
"Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor,
  That sails upon the sea."

The king has written a braid letter,
  And signed it wi' his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,
  Was walking on the sand.

The first line that Sir Patrick read,
  A loud laugh laughed he;
The next line that Sir Patrick read,
  The tear blinded his e'e.

"O wha is this has done this deed,
  This ill deed done to me,
To send me out this time o' the year,
  To sail upon the sea!

"Mak' haste, mak' haste, my merry men all,
  Our guid ship sails the morn:"
"O say na sae, my master dear,
  For I fear a deadly storm.

"Late, late yestreen I saw the new moon,
Wi' the auld moon in her arm,
And I fear, I fear, my dear master,
That we will come to harm."

O our Scots nobles were right laith
To wet their cork-heeled shoon;
But lang ere a' the play were played,
Their hats they swam aboon.

O lang, lang may their ladies sit,
Wi' their fans into their hand,
Or e'er they see Sir Patrick Spens
Come sailing to the land.

O lang, lang may their ladies stand,
Wi' their gold kems in their hair,
Waiting for their ain dear lords,
For they'll see them na mair.

Haf owre, half owre to Aberdour,
It's fifty fadom deep,
And there lies guid Sir Patrick Spens,
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet.

The popular ballad and the folk-song are very closely akin. "Fair Helen" has been classed both as a folk-song and as a popular ballad. Perhaps it is best classed as a lyrical ballad though not in the sense of Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads*. It is one of the exceedingly few folk-poems which Palgrave included in *The Golden Treasury*. *Burd* means maiden; *meikle*, great.

FAIR HELEN

I wish I were where Helen lies;
Night and day on me she cries;
O that I were where Helen lies
On fair Kirconnell lea!

Curst be the heart that thought the thought,
And curst the hand that fired the shot,
When in my arms burd Helen dropt,
And died to succor me!

O think na but my heart was sair
When my Love dropt down and spak' nae mair!
I laid her down wi' meikle care
On fair Kirconnell lea.

As I went down the water-side,
None but my foe to be my guide,
None but my foe to be my guide,
On fair Kirconnell lea;

I lighted down my sword to draw,
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
For her sake that died for me.

O Helen fair, beyond compare!
I'll make a garland of thy hair
Shall bind my heart for evermair
Until the day I die.

O that I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
Out of my bed she bids me rise,
Says "Haste and come to me!"

O Helen fair! O Helen chaste!
If I were with thee, I were blest,
Where thou lies low and takes thy rest
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish my grave were growing green,
A winding-sheet drawn ower my een,
And I in Helen's arms lying,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish I were where Helen lies;
Night and day on me she cries;
And I am weary of the skies,
Since my Love died for me.

The favorite hero of the ballads is the outlaw. Robin Hood and Johnnie Armstrong are the great heroes of British balladry. The outlaw hero is the enemy of the rich and the friend of the poor. In the cowboy ballads of the Western plains the outlaw plays a similar rôle. Jesse James in character strikingly resembles Robin Hood, and, like him, is betrayed to his death by one whom he supposes to be a friend. The cowboy ballads, though inferior to the best of the British ballads, possess the same general characteristics. We quote from John A. Lomax's *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads.*

JESSE JAMES

Jesse James was a lad that killed a-many a man;
He robbed the Danville train.
But that dirty little coward that shot Mr. Howard
Has laid poor Jesse in his grave.

Poor Jesse had a wife to mourn for his life,
Three children, they were brave.

But that dirty little coward that shot Mr. Howard
Has laid poor Jesse in his grave.

It was Robert Ford, that dirty little coward,
I wonder how he does feel,
For he ate of Jesse's bread and he slept in Jesse's bed,
Then laid poor Jesse in his grave.

Jesse was a man, a friend to the poor,
He never could see a man suffer pain:
And with his brother Frank he robbed the Chicago bank,
And stopped the Glendale train.

It was his brother Frank that robbed the Gallatin bank,
And carried the money from the town;
It was in this very place that they had a little race,
For they shot Captain Sheets to the ground.

They went to the crossing not very far from there,
And there they did the same;
With the agent on his knees, he delivered up the keys
To the outlaws, Frank and Jesse James.

It was on Wednesday night, the moon was shining bright,
They robbed the Glendale train;
The people they did say, for many miles away,
It was robbed by Frank and Jesse James.

It was on Saturday night, Jesse was at home
Talking with his family brave,
Robert Ford came along like a thief in the night
And laid poor Jesse in his grave.

The people held their breath when they heard of Jesse's death,
And wondered how he ever came to die.

It was one of the gang called little Robert Ford,
He shot poor Jesse on the sly.

Jesse went to his rest with his hand on his breast;
The devil will be upon his knee.
He was born one day in the county of Clay
And came from a solitary race.

This song was made by Billy Gashade,
As soon as the news did arrive;
He said there was no man with the law in his hand
Who could take Jesse James when alive.

The literary ballad is to be sharply distinguished from the popular ballad. Fortunately, we have a unique opportunity to compare a literary ballad with the popular ballad upon which it is based. Scott's "Lochinvar" had its source in the old Scottish ballad "Katharine Jaffray." The reader should carefully compare these poems as examples of the two types of the ballad. *Laird* means squire or lord; *mither*, mother; *sindry*, several persons; *nouther*, neither; *garred*, made. The last stanza means: They drag you about from place to place, wear you out, and poison you.

KATHARINE JAFFRAY

There lived a lass in yonder dale,
And down in yonder glen, O,
And Katharine Jaffray was her name,
Well known by many men, O.

Out came the Laird of Lauderdale,
Out frae the South Countrie,

All for to court this pretty maid,
Her bridegroom for to be.

He has telled her father and mither baith
And a' the rest o' her kin,
And has telled the lass hersel',
And her consent has win.

Then came the Laird of Lochinton,
Out frae the English border,
All for to court this pretty maid,
Well mounted in good order.

He's telled her father and mither baith,
As I hear sindry say,
Be he has nae telled the lass hersel',
Till on her wedding day.

When day was set, and friends were met,
And married to be,
Lord Lauderdale came to the place,
The bridal for to see.

"O are you come for sport, young man?
Or are you come for play?
Or are you come for a sight o' our bride,
Just on her wedding day?"

"I'm nouther come for sport," he says,
"Nor am I come for play;
But if I had one sight o' your bride,
I'll mount and ride away."

There was a glass of the red wine
Filled up them atween,

And aye she drank to Lauderdale,
Wha her true-love had been.

Then he took her by the milk-white hand,
And by the grass-green sleeve,
And he mounted her behind him there,
At the bridegroom he asked nae leave.

Then the blood run down by the Cowden Banks,
And down by Cowden Braes,
And aye she garred the trumpet sound,
"O this is foul, foul play!"

Now a' ye that in England are,
Or are in England born,
Come ne'er to Scotland to court a lass,
Or else ye'll get the scorn.

They haik ye up and settle ye by,
Till on your wedding day,
And gi'e ye frogs instead o' fish,
And play ye foul, foul play.

Scott was thoroughly familiar with the old ballads of Scotland. In fact, early in life he published a collection of them entitled *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border.* We find echoes of the popular ballads in many of his novels and poems. "Lochinvar" is taken from his *Marmion,* in which it is sung as a song by Lady Heron.

LOCHINVAR

Oh! young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide Border his steed was the best;
And save his good broadsword he weapons had nore.

He rode all unarmed and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He stayed not for brake and he stopped not for stone,
He swam the Eske river where ford there was none,
But ere he alighted at Netherby gate
The bride had consented, the gallant came late:
For a laggard in love and a dastard in war
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,
Among bridesmen, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all:
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword,—
For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word,—
"Oh! come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?"—

"I long wooed your daughter, my suit you denied;
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide—
And now am I come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine,
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kissed the goblet; the knight took it up,
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand ere her mother could bar,—
"Now tread we a measure!" said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume;

And the bride-maidens whispered "'Twere better by far
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar."

One touch to her hand and one word in her ear,
When they reached the hall-door, and the charger stood near;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung!
"She is won! we are gone, over bank, bush, and scaur;
They'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Graemes of the Netherby clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran!
There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832)

When one analyzes the two ballads to find what it is that makes them so different, one notices, first, that Scott tells his story, not in the simple ballad stanza, but in the more appropriate anapestic couplet, which, as we have noted in Byron's "Destruction of Sennacherib," is peculiarly well suited to stirring action. Scott omits, at the outset, the matter contained in the first five stanzas of "Katharine Jaffray" because he wishes to emphasize only the chief incident, the elopement. The skilful artist is known by what he rejects as clearly as by what he includes. Scott's most striking changes are seen in the rival lovers. In the old ballad the lairds are distinguished chiefly by the fact that the Scotch lover is successful, while the English lover is cheated of his bride. Scott makes Lochinvar an individual, a "person." The opening

stanza and the comment of the bride-maidens give us his character: he is a handsome, gallant, impetuous knight. He is just the man to dare to attempt stealing the bride from the altar, and just the man, too, to succeed in the attempt. Of the English lover Scott makes "a laggard in love and a dastard in war." This is to produce an emphatic contrast between the two lovers and to lead us to sympathize with Lochinvar's bold theft of the bride. In the old ballad the English lover asks the newcomer his business at the wedding. In Scott's poem it is the bride's father who boldly challenges Lochinvar while "the poor craven bridegroom said never a word." Finally, Scott drops the moral contained in the last two stanzas of "Katharine Jaffray" as only a poor Scottish joke at the expense of the English. He makes us sympathize with Lochinvar, not because he is a Scotchman, but because he is the better man of the two.

Popular ballads seldom or never have the faults of artificiality, false sentiment, and over-sophistication, which beset the cultivated poet; but they are rarely notable works of art. At their best they are deficient in metrical correctness, and rarely display any of the finer rhythmical harmonies. The literary ballad not only reveals a far greater command of the resources of language and versification; it also shows greater skill in narration, description, and characterization.

Nevertheless, the debt of the literary ballads to the popular ballads is very great. Just as all forms of the lyric derive ultimately from the folk-song, so all later narrative poetry has its beginnings in the ballad. Moreover, the old ballads are still, like the Bible and Greek

mythology, a storehouse from which later poets draw characters and incidents. Scott himself borrowed the Locksley of his *Ivanhoe* from the Robin Hood of the old ballads. There is a very distinct echo of "Sir Patrick Spens" in Longfellow's "Wreck of the Hesperus" and in Masefield's "Yarn of the 'Loch Achray.'" Other literary ballads which owe something to the popular ballads are Wordsworth's "Lucy Gray," Keats's "La Belle Dame sans Merci," Tennyson's "Lady Clare," Rossetti's "Troy Town" and "Sister Helen," Yeats's "Father Gilligan," and Kipling's "Danny Deever." Longer narrative poems like Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel* also owe much to the old ballads.

"Danny Deever," which, to the music of Walter Damrosch, is often sung like an old ballad, recalls "Lord Randal" in the question and answer method by which the story is told. Kipling employs the ballad stanza, as one may see from dividing his long lines; but Kipling varies his refrain with a consummate skill far beyond the reach of the old ballad-makers.

DANNY DEEVER

"What are the bugles blowin' for?" said Files-on-Parade.
"To turn you out, to turn you out," the Colour-Sergeant said.
"What makes you look so white, so white?" said Files-on-Parade.
"I'm dreadin' what I've got to watch," the Colour-Sergeant said.
For they're hangin' Danny Deever, you can hear the Dead March play,

The regiment's in 'ollow square—they're hangin' him to-day;
They've taken of his buttons off an' cut his stripes away,
An' they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

"What makes the rear-rank breathe so 'ard?" said Files-on-Parade.
"It's bitter cold, it's bitter cold," the Colour-Sergeant said.
"What makes that front-rank man fall down?" said Files-on-Parade.
"A touch o' sun, a touch o' sun," the Colour-Sergeant said.
They are hangin' Danny Deever, they are marching of 'im round,
They 'ave 'alted Danny Deever by 'is coffin on the ground;
An' 'e'll swing in 'arf a minute for a sneakin' shootin' hound—
O they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'!

"'Is cot was right-'and cot to mine," said Files-on-Parade.
"'E's sleepin' out an' far to-night," the Colour-Sergeant said.
"I've drunk 'is beer a score o' times," said Files-on-Parade.
"'E's drinkin' bitter beer alone," the Colour-Sergeant said.
They are hangin' Danny Deever, you must mark 'im to 'is place,
For 'e shot a comrade sleepin'—you must look 'im in the face;
Nine 'undred of 'is county an' the Regiment's disgrace,
While they're hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'.

"What's that so black agin the sun?" said Files-on-Parade.
"It's Danny fightin' 'ard for life," the Colour-Sergeant said.
"What's that that whimpers over'ead?" said Files-on-Parade.
"It's Danny's soul that's passin' now," the Colour-Sergeant said.

For they're done with Danny Deever, you can 'ear the
quickstep play,
The regiment's in column, an' they're marchin' us away;
Ho! the young recruits are shakin', an' they'll want their
beer to-day,
After hangin' Danny Deever in the mornin'!

Rudyard Kipling (*1865-*)

There are echoes of both Kipling and the popular ballads in Masefield's ballads, which often attain high excellence. "The Hounds of Hell" and "Cap on Head" are unfortunately too long for quotation here. We give the first of his *Salt Water Poems and Ballads.*

THE YARN OF THE "LOCH ACHRAY"

The "Loch Achray" was a clipper tall
With seven-and-twenty hands in all.
Twenty to hand and reef and haul,
A skipper to sail and mates to bawl
"Tally on to the tackle-fall,
Heave now 'n' start her, heave 'n' pawl!"
Hear the yarn of a sailor,
An old yarn learned at sea.

Her crew were shipped and they said "Farewell,
So-long, my Tottie, my lovely gell;
We sail to-day if we fetch to hell,
It's time we tackled the wheel a spell."
Hear the yarn of a sailor,
An old yarn learned at sea.

The dockside loafers talked on the quay
The day that she towed down to sea:
"Lord, what a handsome ship she be!

Cheer her, sonny boys, three times three!"
And the dockside loafers gave her a shout
As the red-funnelled tug-boat towed her out;
They gave her a cheer as the custom is,
And the crew yelled "Take our loves to Liz—
Three cheers, bullies, for old Pier Head
'N' the bloody stay-at-homes!" they said.
Hear the yarn of a sailor,
An old yarn learned at sea.

In the grey of the coming on of night
She dropped the tug at the Tuskar Light,
'N' the topsails went to the topmast head
To a chorus that fairly awoke the dead.
She trimmed her yards and slanted South
With her royals set and a bone in her mouth.
Hear the yarn of a sailor,
An old yarn learned at sea.

She crossed the Line and all went well,
They ate, they slept, and they struck the bell
And I give you a gospel truth when I state
The crowd didn't find any fault with the Mate,
But one night off the River Plate.
Hear the yarn of a sailor,
An old yarn learned at sea.

It freshened up till it blew like thunder
And burrowed her deep lee-scuppers under.
The old man said, "I mean to hang on
Till her canvas busts or her sticks are gone"—
Which the blushing looney did, till at last
Overboard went her mizzen-mast.
Hear the yarn of a sailor,
An old yarn learned at sea.

Then a fierce squall struck the "Loch Achray"
And bowed her down to her water-way;
Her main-shrouds gave and her forestay,
And a green sea carried her wheel away;
Ere the watch below had time to dress,
She was cluttered up in a blushing mess.
Hear the yarn of a sailor,
An old yarn learned at sea.

She couldn't lay-to nor yet pay-off,
And she got swept clean in the bloody trough;
Her masts were gone, and afore you knowed
She filled by the head and down she goed.
Her crew made seven-and-twenty dishes
For the big jack-sharks and the little fishes,
And over their bones the water swishes.
Hear the yarn of a sailor,
An old yarn learned at sea.

The wives and girls they watch in the rain
For a ship as won't come home again.
"I reckon it's them head-winds," they say,
She'll be home to-morrow, if not to-day.
I'll just nip home 'n' I'll air the sheets
'N' buy the fixins 'n' cook the meats
As my man likes 'n' as my man eats."

So home they goes by the windy streets,
Thinking their men are homeward bound
With anchors hungry for English ground,
And the bloody fun of it is, they're drowned!
Hear the yarn of a sailor,
An old yarn learned at sea.

John Masefield (1878-)

The literary ballad, like the popular ballad, sometimes has decided lyrical qualities. In a superb ballad of this kind, "La Belle Dame sans Merci," Keats turned to the earlier period when people believed in elves, fairies, and other supernatural beings who, they thought, exercised great influence upon the destinies of mankind. Keats's beautiful siren—the title means "the beautiful lady without pity"—induces a knight to fall in love with her and then deserts him. Keats's stanza is the ballad stanza with two instead of three feet in the fourth line. In rhythmical harmony, pictorial power, and suggestion, however, Keats's poem immeasurably surpasses the old ballads.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

"O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering!
The sedge has wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.

"O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

"I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too."

"I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful—a faery's child.

Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

"I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She look'd at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

"I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song.

"She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna dew,
And sure in language strange she said—
'I love thee true.'

"She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept, and sigh'd full sore,
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
With kisses four.

"And there she lullèd me asleep,
And there I dream'd—Ah! woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dream'd
On the cold hill's side.

"I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
They cried—'La Belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall!'

"I saw their starv'd lips in the gloam,
With horrid warning gapèd wide,
And I awoke and found me here,
On the cold hill's side.

"And this is why I sojourn here,
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake
And no birds sing."

John Keats (*1795-1821*)

Perhaps the best of American ballads are Longfellow's "Skeleton in Armor," Lanier's "Revenge of Hamish," and Whittier's "Skipper Ireson's Ride." Lowell, who suggested to Whittier the use of dialect in the refrain, called "Skipper Ireson's Ride" "by long odds the best of modern ballads."

SKIPPER IRESON'S RIDE

Of all the rides since the birth of time,
Told in story or sung in rhyme,—
On Apuleius's Golden Ass,
Or one-eyed Calender's horse of brass,
Witch astride of a human back,
Islam's prophet on Al-Borak,—
The strangest ride that ever was sped
Was Ireson's out from Marblehead!
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Body of turkey, head of owl,
Wings a-droop like a rained-on fowl,
Feathered and ruffled in every part,
Skipper Ireson stood in the cart.
Scores of women, old and young,
Strong of muscle, and glib of tongue,
Pushed and pulled up the rocky lane,
Shouting and singing the shrill refrain:

"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd and futherr'd and corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Wrinkled scolds with hands on hips,
Girls in bloom of cheek and lips,
Wild-eyed, free-limbed, such as chase
Bacchus round some antique vase,
Brief of skirt, with ankles bare,
Loose of kerchief and loose of hair,
With conch-shells blowing and fish-horns' twang,
Over and over the Maenads sang:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Small pity for him!—He sailed away
From a leaking ship in Chaleur Bay,—
Sailed away from a sinking wreck,
With his own town's-people on her deck!
"Lay by! lay by!" they called to him.
Back he answered, "Sink or swim!
Brag of your catch of fish again!"
And off he sailed through the fog and rain!
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Fathoms deep in dark Chaleur
That wreck shall lie forevermore.
Mother and sister, wife and maid,
Looked from the rocks of Marblehead
Over the moaning and rainy sea,—
Looked for the coming that might not be!
What did the winds and the sea-birds say
Of the cruel captain who sailed away?—

Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Through the street, on either side,
Up flew windows, doors swung wide;
Sharp-tongued spinsters, old wives gray,
Treble lent the fish-horn's bray.
Sea-worn grandsires, cripple-bound,
Hulks of old sailors run aground,
Shook head, and fist, and hat, and cane,
And cracked with curses the hoarse refrain:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Sweetly along the Salem road
Bloom of orchard and lilac showed.
Little the wicked skipper knew
Of the fields so green and the sky so blue.
Riding there in his sorry trim,
Like an Indian idol glum and grim,
Scarcely he seemed the sound to hear
Of voices shouting, far and near:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

"Hear me, neighbors!" at last he cried,—
"What to me is this noisy ride?
What is the shame that clothes the skin
To the nameless horror that lives within?
Waking or sleeping, I see a wreck,
And hear a cry from a reeling deck!
Hate me and curse me,—I only dread
The hand of God and the face of the dead!"

Said old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Then the wife of the skipper lost at sea
Said, "God has touched him! why should we!"
Said an old wife mourning an only son,
"Cut the rogue's tether and let him run!"
So with soft relentings and rude excuse,
Half scorn, half pity, they cut him loose,
And gave him a cloak to hide him in,
And left him alone with his shame and sin.
Poor Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

John Greenleaf Whittier (*1807-1892*)

Much of the best of recent poetry is narrative. Some of the ballads of Masefield and Noyes are worthy of comparison with those of Whittier and Tennyson. Noyes's best ballad is probably "The Highwayman," which, like all good poems, gains immensely from being read aloud.

THE HIGHWAYMAN

PART ONE

I

The wind was a torrent of darkness among the gusty trees,
The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,
The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,
And the highwayman came riding—
Riding—riding—
The highwayman came riding, up to the old inn-door.

II

He'd a French cocked-hat on his forehead, a bunch of lace at his chin,
A coat of the claret velvet, and breeches of brown doe-skin;
They fitted with never a wrinkle: his boots were up to the thigh!
And he rode with a jewelled twinkle,
His pistol butts a-twinkle,
His rapier hilt a-twinkle, under the jewelled sky.

III

Over the cobbles he clattered and clashed in the dark inn-yard,
And tapped with his whip on the shutters, but all was locked and barred;
He whistled a tune to the window, and who should be waiting there
But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Bess, the landlord's daughter,
Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.

IV

And dark in the dark old inn-yard a stable-wicket creaked
Where Tim the ostler listened; his face was white and peaked;
His eyes were hollows of madness, his hair like mouldy hay;
But he loved the landlord's daughter,
The landlord's red-lipped daughter,
Dumb as a dog he listened, and he heard the robber say—

V

"One kiss, my bonny sweetheart, I'm after a prize to-night,
But I shall be back with the yellow gold before the morning light;

Yet, if they press me sharply, and harry me through the day,
Then look for me by moonlight,
Watch for me by moonlight,
I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar the way."

VI

He rose upright in the stirrups; he scarce could reach her hand,
But she loosened her hair i' the casement! His face burnt like a brand
As the black cascade of perfume came tumbling over his breast;
And he kissed its waves in the moonlight,
(Oh, sweet black waves in the moonlight!)
Then he tugged at his rein in the moonlight, and galloped away to the West.

PART TWO

I

He did not come in the dawning; he did not come at noon;
And out o' the tawny sunset, before the rise o' the moon,
When the road was a gipsy's ribbon, looping the purple moor,
A red-coat troop came marching—
Marching—marching—
King George's men came marching, up to the old inn-door.

II

They said no word to the landlord, they drank his ale instead,
But they gagged his daughter and bound her to the foot of her narrow bed;
Two of them knelt at her casement, with muskets at their side!

There was death at every window;
And hell at one dark window;
For Bess could see through her casement, the road that *he* would ride.

III

They had tied her up to attention, with many a sniggering jest;
They had bound a musket beside her, with the barrel beneath her breast!
"Now keep good watch!" and they kissed her.
She heard the dead man say—
Look for me by moonlight;
Watch for me by moonlight;
I'll come to thee by moonlight, though hell should bar the way!

IV

She twisted her hands behind her; but all the knots held good!
She writhed her hands till her fingers were wet with sweat or blood!
They stretched and strained in the darkness, and the hours crawled by like years,
Till now, on the stroke of midnight,
Cold on the stroke of midnight,
The tip of one finger touched it! The trigger at least was hers!

V

The tip of one finger touched it; she strove no more for the rest!
Up, she stood to attention, with the barrel beneath her breast,
She would not risk their hearing; she would not strive again;
For the road lay bare in the moonlight;
Blank and bare in the moonlight;

And the blood of her veins in the moonlight throbbed to her love's refrain.

VI

Tlot-tlot; tlot-tlot! Had they heard it? The horse-hoofs ringing clear;
Tlot-tlot, tlot-tlot, in the distance? Were they deaf that they did not hear?
Down the ribbon of moonlight, over the brow of the hill,
The highwayman came riding,
Riding, riding!
The red-coats looked to their priming! She stood up, straight and still!

VII

Tlot-tlot, in the frosty silence! *Tlot-tlot,* in the echoing night!
Nearer he came and nearer! Her face was like a light!
Her eyes grew wide for a moment; she drew one last deep breath,
Then her finger moved in the moonlight,
Her musket shattered the moonlight,
Shattered her breast in the moonlight and warned him—with her death.

VIII

He turned; he spurred to the West; he did not know who stood
Bowed, with her head o'er the musket, drenched with her own red blood!
Not till the dawn he heard it, his face grew grey to hear
How Bess, the landlord's daughter,
The landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Had watched for her love in the moonlight, and died in the darkness there.

IX

Back, he spurred like a madman, shrieking a curse to the sky,
With the white road smoking behind him and his rapier brandished high!
Blood-red were his spurs i' the golden noon; wine-red was his velvet coat,
When they shot him down on the highway,
Down like a dog on the highway,
And he lay in his blood on the highway, with the bunch of lace at his throat.

. . . . . .

X

And still of a winter's night, they say, when the wind is in the trees,
When the moon is a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas,
When the road is a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor,
A highwayman comes riding—
Riding—riding—
A highwayman comes riding, up to the old inn-door.

XI

Over the cobbles he clatters and clangs in the dark inn-yard;
He taps with his whip on the shutters, but all is locked and barred;
He whistles a tune to the window, and who should be waiting there
But the landlord's black-eyed daughter,
Bess, the landlord's daughter,
Plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair.

Alfred Noyes (1880-)

CHAPTER VII

THE SONNET

A Sonnet is a moment's monument,—
  Memorial from the Soul's eternity
  To one dead deathless hour. Look that it be,
Whether for lustral rite or dire portent,
Of its own arduous fullness reverent:
  Carve it in ivory or in ebony,
  As Day or Night may rule; and let time see
Its flowering crest impearled and orient.

A Sonnet is a coin: its face reveals
  The soul,—its converse, to what Power 'tis due:—
Whether for tribute to the august appeals
  Of Life, or dower in Love's high retinue,
It serve: or, 'mid the dark wharf's cavernous breath,
In Charon's palm it pay the toll to Death.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti (*1828-1882*)

Although primitive poetry was largely spontaneous and more or less irregular, skill provoked emulation, poets soon followed models, and many fixed stanzaic forms eventually became established. In like manner at a later period whole poems came to be modeled on certain structural patterns, the chief features of which were uniformity in meter, in rime, in the number of lines, and, sometimes, in the use of a refrain. Great poems have as a rule been of simple structure, but the greatest poets have often, for some of their compositions, delighted in

the fixed forms. Because of their difficulty, these forms challenge the careful workman. They encourage the search for the right word and compel condensation. While the thought may be as varied as human experience, the form offers the reader the pleasure of recognition.

The most famous of all the fixed forms is the sonnet, great examples of which are found in Italian, French, German, and other modern languages as well as English. The sonnet was a product of the early Italian Renaissance,—a period when the crafts of the goldsmith, the painter, and the poet were plied with equal care and skill. It was introduced into England early in the sixteenth century by Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, and at once attained a remarkable vogue. Shakespeare, Spenser, and Sidney, as well as a number of minor Elizabethan poets, wrote sonnet sequences. Between the death of Milton and the dawn of the Romantic period the form was neglected, but from the appearance of William Lisle Bowles's *Sonnets* in 1789 it has, to the present day, embodied some of the finest thoughts of great poets both English and American.

In poetry written in English there are, in order of importance, three main types of the sonnet: the *Italian*, the *Shakespearean*, and the *Spenserian*. The Italian, or Petrarchan, receives its name from the fact that it was used by Petrarch and other Italian poets. Each of the other two types takes its name from the most illustrious English poet who early made an extended use of it.

The first great English poet to use the Italian sonnet form was the scholarly John Milton. Afflicted, it is believed, by cataracts which a modern surgeon could have

removed in an hour, the poet of *Comus* served the Commonwealth in spite of failing eyesight, and lived to become the author of *Paradise Lost*. Milton's reaction from the gloom of blindness is given in a sonnet which concludes with one of the most frequently quoted—and misquoted—lines in the language. The following is a perfect Italian sonnet of the purest type. It consists of fourteen iambic pentameter lines. The first eight lines form the *octave*, which rimes *abbaabba;* the remaining six lines, riming *cdecde*, constitute the *sestet*.

WHEN I CONSIDER

When I consider how my light is spent
  Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
  And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
  My true account, lest He returning chide,—
  "Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"
I fondly ask:—But Patience, to prevent

That murmur, soon replies: "God doth not need
  Either man's work, or His own gifts: who best
    Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best: His state
Is kingly; thousands at His bidding speed
  And post o'er land and ocean without rest:—
    They also serve who only stand and wait."

John Milton (1608-1674)

John Keats—who, among English poets, was peculiarly the high priest of beauty—was especially stirred by the art and mythology of ancient Greece. In a sonnet he expressed his feelings upon first reading the *Iliad* and the

Odyssey in the translations by the Elizabethan poet, George Chapman. Keats, of course, had Balboa, not Cortez, in mind. Darien is the Isthmus of Panama. All that was said of the form of Milton's "When I Consider" is true of this sonnet except that the sestet rimes *cdcdcd*, a succession nearly as common as *cdecde*. Whether a sonnet is printed in two divisions, or four, or three, or one, the structural principles are the same.

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER

Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent upon a peak in Darien.

John Keats (1795-1821)

The two parts of the Italian sonnet have more than a stanzaic significance. The subject is always cast in a certain form. The octave presents a thought, question, or problem, which the sestet completes appropriately. Verify this statement with regard to the sonnets already quoted, observing that the point of division is not always

coincidental with the passing from octave to sestet. The thought of the octave frequently, in fact, runs over into the first half of the next line. In poorly constructed sonnets (which may, however, be excellent poems) the distinction between sestet and octave is not strictly maintained. In all regular sonnets of the Italian type the rime scheme of the octave is *abbaabba;* in the sestet, however, great latitude in rime is allowed.

Although the Italian is regarded as the standard sonnet, the other types, particularly the Shakespearean, are vehicles for some superb poems. The Shakespearean sonnet does not afford the symphonic effect of the Italian, but its heroic quatrains produce a sweeping movement, and the concluding heroic couplet often gives to the thought an effective epigrammatic turn. The rime scheme of the three quatrains and the couplet is *abab cdcd efef gg.* Shakespeare's one hundred and fifty-four sonnets constitute a sequence unparalleled for sustained power and beauty. Like Horace, Ronsard, and other poets, the author spoke with prophetic confidence of his future fame. Strangely enough, however, the "fair friend" whom he addresses in Sonnet CIV has fallen heir to an anonymous immortality. The phrase "eye I ey'd" in this sonnet reflects the Elizabethan fondness for conceits. "Fair thou ow'st" means beauty you possess. A number quoted as a title refers to the sonnet's place in its cycle.

XVIII

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:

Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:

Sometimes too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd:
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimm'd.

But thy eternal summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;
Nor shall death brag thou wand'rest in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:

So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

LXXI

No longer mourn for me when I am dead
Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell
Give warning to the world, that I am fled
From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell.

Nay, if you read this line, remember not
The hand that writ it; for I love you so
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot
If thinking on me then should make you woe.

O if, I say, you look upon this verse
When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,
But let your love even with my life decay,

Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
And mock you with me after I am gone.

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

CIV

To me, fair friend, you never can be old,
For as you were when first your eye I ey'd,
Such seems your beauty still. Three winters cold
Have from the forests shook three summers' pride;

Three beauteous springs to yellow autumn turn'd
In process of the seasons have I seen,
Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burn'd,
Since first I saw you fresh, which yet are green.

Ah! yet doth beauty, like a dial-hand,
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceiv'd;
So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,
Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceiv'd:

For fear of which, hear this, thou age unbred,—
Ere you were born, was beauty's summer dead.

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

The following example of the Spenserian sonnet is taken from Spenser's cycle of love sonnets, the *Amoretti*. Although the poem was written more than three centuries ago, the word *fondness* (folly) is the only one that might not be used today. The spelling has, however, been modernized—as is usual in the reprinting of Elizabethan works. Extravagant laudation of female beauty was common in the court circles of Renaissance Europe. Well known is Spenser's own lavish praise of Queen Elizabeth, to whom he dedicated the *Faërie Queene*. The Spenserian sonnet differs from the Shakespearean only in that the quatrains are interlocked by rime, the scheme being *abab bcbc cdcd ee*.

XXXVII

What guile is this, that those her golden tresses
She doth attire under a net of gold;
And with sly skill so cunningly them dresses,
That which is gold, or hair, may scarce be told?

Is it that men's frail eyes, which gaze too bold,
She may entangle in that golden snare;
And, being caught, may craftily enfold
Their weaker hearts which are not well aware?

Take heed, therefore, mine eyes, how ye do stare
Henceforth too rashly on that guileful net,
In which, if ever ye entrappèd are,
Out of her hands ye by no means shall get.

Fondness it were for any, being free,
To covet fetters, though they golden be!

Edmund Spenser (*1552?-1599*)

Despite the fact that George Meredith described as sonnets the sixteen-line poems of his cycle on *Modern Love*, the term should be understood to mean invariably a poem of exactly fourteen lines. Iambic pentameter is equally obligatory. With regard to rime, however, the requirements are more flexible. Fourteen lines of blank verse or seven heroic couplets do not constitute a sonnet, yet the term is applied to poems which depart as much from the norm as do Shelley's "Ozymandias" and Arnold's "Shakespeare." Some critics, on the other hand, use the term sonnet only in its strictest Italian sense, applying to the Shakespearean model the term *fourteener*. Below

are given different types of sonnets representing every age in which the form has flourished in English.

Sir Philip Sidney, who died from battle-wounds at the age of thirty-two, was famous as a courtier, poet, critic, ambassador, and soldier. Especially when one considers that the author wrote before any of the great poets of modern England, the sonnet below is enough to prove the eminence of his poetic genius. Sidney's cycle is entitled *Astrophel and Stella*. Astrophel was, of course, the author. Stella was probably the Lady Penelope Devereux, whose parents broke her betrothal to Sidney in order to marry her to a wealthy nobleman. *Rosy* seems to imply the idea of *sub rosa*, *i.e.*, quiet, silent. *Prease* is modern press; the old form is retained for the sake of rime. This sonnet is, in rime, a Shakespearean and Spenserian hybrid.

XXXIX

Come, Sleep! O sleep, the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
The indifferent judge between the high and low;

With shield of proof shield me from out the prease
Of those fierce darts Despair at me doth throw:
O make in me those civil wars to cease;
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so.

Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
A chamber deaf of noise and blind of light,
A rosy garland and a weary head:
And if these things, as being thine in right,

Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586)

The next sonnet, with its strict Shakespearean form and the unexpected turn of thought in the couplet, is from Drayton's cycle entitled *Idea.* It shows more sincerity of feeling than most Elizabethan sonnets.

LXI

Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part—
Nay I have done, you get no more of me;
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free;

Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.

Now at the last gasp of love's latest breath,
When, his pulse failing, passion speechless lies,
When faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And innocence is closing up his eyes,

—Now if thou would'st when all have given him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover!

Michael Drayton (1561-1631)

Milton's "On the Late Massacre in Piedmont" gives an English attitude toward the slaughter—by troops of the Turin government—of Protestants in the Italian province of Piedmont. Milton served in a dual capacity; he not only wrote the sonnet, but, as foreign secretary, penned

in Latin Cromwell's sharp reply which protected the survivors. To the Puritans, the church of Rome was Babylon.

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
  Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
  Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
  Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
  Slain by the bloody Piedmontese, that rolled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
  To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
  The triple Tyrant, that from these may grow
A hundredfold, who, having learnt thy way,
  Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

John Milton (1608-1674)

Wordsworth's sonnets do not show the sustained excellence of Shakespeare's, but for lofty theme and notable expression a few stand near the head of any list. Among this number are "London, 1802" and "The World is Too Much with Us," both of which voice a young poet's dissatisfaction with the spirit of his age.

LONDON, 1802

Milton! thou should'st be living at this hour:
  England hath need of thee: she is a fen
  Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,

Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.

Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
The sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;

It moves us not.—Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

In his life and his poetry, Byron, like Milton, rendered service to the cause of human liberty. He met his death in Greece, whither he had gone to lend a hand in the

struggle for independence. "The Prisoner of Chillon" is widely known. We quote the prefatory sonnet. Chillon was an island prison in the Lake of Geneva; Bonnivard was a Genevan patriot imprisoned there at a time when the city was under foreign domination. Note that the typical rime order of the octave is not here observed.

SONNET ON CHILLON

Eternal Spirit of the chainless Mind!
  Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,
  For there thy habitation is the heart—
The heart which love of Thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd—
  To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
  Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.

Chillon! thy prison is a holy place
  And thy sad floor an altar, for 'twas trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
  Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard! May none those marks efface!
  For they appeal from tyranny to God.

George Noel Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824)

Though Shelley, like Byron, wrote few sonnets, his "Ozymandias" was before Masefield perhaps the finest expression in English of the obliterating power of time—a power that literary art alone seems able to withstand. There was apparently no such ruler as Ozymandias; consequently Shelley coined for the king a sonorous imperial name. "Ozymandias" seemingly reflects its author's impression of Napoleon.

OZYMANDIAS

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: "Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown

And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mock'd them and the heart that fed;

And on the pedestal these words appear—
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'

Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away."

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822)

An excellent idea of the range of poetic subject matter may be acquired by comparing the foregoing sonnet and the following. The "king of kings" and the cricket—there is something in each for the interpretative imagination of the poet. "On the Grasshopper and Cricket" was composed under interesting circumstances. Cowden Clarke, Leigh Hunt, and Keats were passing an evening together discussing poetry. Keats maintained that poetry could be found in everything. Clarke was skeptical and, perhaps not knowing that Cowley and Lovelace had used it, suggested the grasshopper as an impossible subject. The result was two great sonnets, one by Keats and one by Hunt

ON THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET

The poetry of earth is never dead:
When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead;
That is the Grasshopper's—he takes the lead
In summer luxury,—he has never done
With his delights; for, when tired out with fun,
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.

The poetry of earth is ceasing never:
On a lone winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills
The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,
And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,
The Grasshopper's among some grassy hills.

John Keats (1795-1821)

Several nineteenth century poets have followed the Elizabethan custom of writing a cycle of sonnets on love. Meredith's *Modern Love* has been mentioned. Less analytic than Rossetti's *The House of Life* and less pretentious than Bridges's *The Growth of Love*, Mrs. Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese* constituted the most widely read cycle of the nineteenth century. The sonnets express vividly the romantic love of the author for her poet husband. Mrs. Browning was a brunette, and her husband often playfully termed her "the Portuguese"—a title under which, following the early custom of respectable women writers, she preserved her anonymity.

XLIII

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints,—I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861)

Robert Bridges, the present poet laureate of England, is the successor of Alfred Austin, Alfred Tennyson, William Wordsworth, and Robert Southey—to name the laureates of the past century only. The laureate need not necessarily be the greatest poet of his generation, but he should be a man of correct life and an upholder of the classic traditions of English poetry. He has no prescribed duties, but is expected to celebrate in verse important occasions or anniversaries in the life of the sovereign or the history of the nation. Although in neither of these categories, the sonnet chosen from *The Growth of Love* is the appropriate utterance of a poet laureate, for it states the essentials of a nation's greatness—the strength, ambition, and purity of its youth. Note the elaborate figure of speech.

XV

Who builds a ship must first lay down the keel
  Of health, whereto the ribs of mirth are wed:
  And knit, with beams and knees of strength, a bed
For decks of purity, her floor and ceil.
Upon her masts, Adventure, Pride, and Zeal,
  To fortune's wind the sails of purpose spread:
  And at the prow make figured maidenhead
O'erride the seas and answer to the wheel.

And let him deep in memory's hold have stor'd
  Water of Helicon: and let him fit
The needle that doth true with heaven accord:
  Then bid her crew, love, diligence and wit
With justice, courage, temperance come aboard,
  And at her helm the master reason sit.

Robert Bridges (1844-)

Rupert Brooke's talent was rapidly matured into authenticity by the World War. Like Byron, Brooke met death while serving the cause of liberty in the Near East. Partly because of his merit and apparent promise, partly because of the circumstances of his death, his posthumous fame has been considerable. From a sequence of five sonnets entitled "Nineteen-Fourteen" we quote the deservedly popular

THE SOLDIER

If I should die, think only this of me:
  That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England. There shall be
  In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;

A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
  Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam;
A body of England's, breathing English air,
  Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
  A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
    Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
  And laughter, learnt of friends, and gentleness,
    In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Rupert Brooke (1887-1915)

Literary criticism is not exactly within the province of poetry, but one occasionally finds in verse a rare tribute or appreciation. Arnold's "Shakespeare," though it alludes only to Shakespeare's tragedies, is unsurpassed; and Watson's sonnet rivals it closely. Sir Sidney Lee's *Life* is a recent exhaustive biography of Shakespeare.

SHAKESPEARE

Others abide our question. Thou art free.
  We ask and ask: Thou smilest and art still,
  Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill
That to the stars uncrowns his majesty,
Planting his stedfast footsteps in the sea,
  Making the Heaven of Heavens his dwelling-place,
  Spares but the cloudy border of his base
To the foil'd searching of mortality:
And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,
  Self-school'd, self-scann'd, self-honour'd, self-secure,
Didst walk on Earth unguess'd at. Better so!
  All pains the immortal spirit must endure,

All weakness that impairs, all griefs that bow,
Find their sole voice in that victorious brow.

Matthew Arnold (1822-1888)

WRITTEN IN MR. SIDNEY LEE'S "LIFE OF SHAKESPEARE"

Lee, who in niggard soil hast delved, to find
  What things soever may be known or guessed
  Of him that to the ages gives no rest,
The world-watched secret peak of human mind;
Thy choice was well, who leav'st to fools and blind
  All visionary, vague, fantastic quest.
  None to the Presence hath more nearly pressed,
Nor hast thou him dis-served to serve mankind.

'Tis said of certain poets, that writ large
  Their sombre names on tragic stage and tome,
    They are gulfs or estuaries of Shakespeare's sea.
    Lofty the praise; and honour enough, to be
As children playing by his mighty marge,
  Glorious with casual sprinklings of the foam.

Sir William Watson (1858-)

Many great poets have been translators. Chapman, Pope, Cowper, and Bryant translated Homer, and opened up "the glory that was Greece" to hundreds of thousands who could not read the original. Longfellow, one of the most scholarly as well as one of the most popular of poets, translated the *Divine Comedy* of Dante. To his translation he prefixed a number of sonnets, two of which, here reproduced, are among the best in American poetry. The first contains an excellent picture of the artist's close identification with his work. While translating Dante,

Longfellow forgot the Civil War which was then raging, forgot the tragic death of his wife, and felt that he lived in the dawning years of the Italian Renaissance.

I

Oft have I seen at some cathedral door
A laborer, pausing in the dust and heat,
Lay down his burden, and with reverent feet
Enter, and cross himself, and on the floor
Kneel to repeat his paternoster o'er;
Far off the noises of the world retreat;
The loud vociferations of the street
Become an undistinguishable roar.

So, as I enter here from day to day,
And leave my burden at this minster gate,
Kneeling in prayer, and not ashamed to pray,
The tumult of the time disconsolate
To inarticulate murmurs dies away,
While the eternal ages watch and wait.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882)

VI

O star of morning and of liberty!
O bringer of the light, whose splendor shines
Above the darkness of the Apennines,
Forerunner of the day that is to be!
The voices of the city and the sea,
The voices of the mountains and the pines,
Repeat thy song, till the familiar lines
Are footpaths for the thought of Italy!

Thy fame is blown abroad from all the heights,
Through all the nations; and a sound is heard,
As of a mighty wind, and men devout,

Strangers of Rome, and the new proselytes,
In their own language hear thy wondrous word,
And many are amazed and many doubt.
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882)

John Masefield is one of the greatest poets alive today, and, in the number and power of his sonnets, is certainly the greatest sonneteer since Wordsworth. He probably reached the acme of his skill in the series, merely entitled "Sonnets," the initial line of the first member of which is

Like bones the ruins of the cities stand.

We quote from this series the second sonnet which may be profitably compared with Shelley's "Ozymandias" and with "The Dead Village," by Edwin Arlington Robinson.

II

Now they are gone with all their songs and sins,
Women and men, to dust; their copper penny,
Of living, spent, among these dusty inns;
The glittering One made level with the many.

Their speech is gone, none speaks it, none can read
The pictured writing of their conqueror's march;
The dropping plaster of a fading screed
Ceils with its mildews the decaying arch.

The fields are sand, the streets are fallen stones;
Nothing is bought or sold there, nothing spoken,
The sand hides all, the wind that blows it moans,
Blowing more sand until the plinth is broken.

Day in, day out, no other utterance falls;
Only the sand, pit-pitting on the walls.

John Masefield (1874-)

We quote two other examples from Masefield's several dozen masterly sonnets which ring varying chimes on the universal subjects, love, beauty, and decay. Part of the thought of the first sonnet is expressed in the well-known quatrain from the *Rubáiyát:*

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled;
That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropt in its Lap from some once lovely Head.

The second is the first in a series of two entitled "On Growing Old."

I NEVER SEE THE RED ROSE CROWN THE YEAR

I never see the red rose crown the year,
Nor feel the young grass underneath my tread,
Without the thought "This living beauty here
Is earth's remembrance of a beauty dead.
Surely where all this glory is displayed
Love has been quick, like fire, to high ends,
Here, in this grass, an altar has been made
For some white joy, some sacrifice of friends;
Here, where I stand, some leap of human brains
Has touched immortal things and left its trace,
The earth is happy here, the gleam remains;
Beauty is here, the spirit of the place,
I touch the faith which nothing can destroy,
The earth, the living church of ancient joy."

John Masefield (1874-)

ON GROWING OLD

I

Be with me, Beauty, for the fire is dying,
My dog and I are old, too old for roving,
Man, whose young passion sets the spindrift flying,
Is soon too lame to march, too cold for loving.

I take the book and gather to the fire,
Turning old yellow leaves; minute by minute,
The clock ticks to my heart; a withered wire
Moves a thin ghost of music in the spinet.

I cannot sail your seas, I cannot wander
Your cornland, nor your hill-land nor your valleys,
Ever again, nor share the battle yonder
Where the young knight the broken squadron rallies.

Only stay quiet while my mind remembers
The beauty of fire from the beauty of embers.

John Masefield (1874-)

The contrast between Masefield and his greatest rival sonneteer, the American poet, Edwin Arlington Robinson, is—to a certain extent—the contrast between the Shakespearean and the Italian sonnet. Masefield shows fire; Robinson restraint. Masefield is exuberant; Robinson, subtle. "Firelight" and "Souvenir" illustrate Robinson's mature manner.

FIRELIGHT

Ten years together without yet a cloud,
They seek each other's eyes at intervals
Of gratefulness to firelight and four walls

For love's obliteration of the crowd.
Serenely and perennially endowed
And bowered as few may be, their joy recalls
No snake, no sword; and over them there falls
The blessing of what neither says aloud.

Wiser for silence, they were not so glad
Were she to read the graven tale of lines
On the wan face of one somewhere alone;
Nor were they more content could he have had
Her thoughts a moment since of one who shines
Apart, and would be hers if he had known.

Edwin Arlington Robinson (1869-)

SOUVENIR

A vanished house that for an hour I knew
By some forgotten chance when I was young
Had once a glimmering window overhung
With honeysuckle wet with evening dew.
Along the path tall dusky dahlias grew,
And shadowy hydrangeas reached and swung
Ferociously; and over me, among
The moths and mysteries, a blurred bat flew.

Somewhere within there were dim presences
Of days that hovered and of years gone by.
I waited, and between their silences
There was an evanescent faded noise;
And though a child, I knew it was the voice
Of one whose occupation was to die.

Edwin Arlington Robinson (1869-)

After reading a score of famous examples, one will doubly appreciate two or three sonnets on the sonnet. Rossetti's, quoted as a motto at the beginning of the

chapter, is purely critical. Wordsworth's sonnet is less critical than historical. Dante, Petrarch, and Tasso were the supreme poets of Italy. Camöens, author of the epic *The Lusiads*, was the greatest poet of Portugal. Shakespeare, Spenser, and Milton were the greatest English sonneteers before Wordsworth himself.

SCORN NOT THE SONNET

Scorn not the Sonnet; Critic, you have frowned,
  Mindless of its just honours; with this key
  Shakespeare unlocked his heart; the melody
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound;
A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound;
  With it Camöens soothed an exile's grief;
  The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf
Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned

His visionary brow: a glow-worm lamp,
  It cheered mild Spenser, called from Faery-land
To struggle through dark ways; and, when a damp
  Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
The Thing became a trumpet, whence he blew
Soul-animating strains—alas, too few!

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

Other excellent sonnets on the sonnet are "Nuns fret not," by William Wordsworth; "The Sonnet," by Richard Watson Gilder; "The Master and the Slave," by Edwin Arlington Robinson; and "The Sonnet," by the Australasian poet, Louis Lavater. From Theodore Watts-Dunton we quote

THE SONNET'S VOICE

Yon silvery billows breaking on the beach
  Fall back in foam beneath the star-shine clear,
  The while my rhymes are murmuring in your ear,
A restless lore like that the billows teach;
For on these sonnet-waves my soul would reach
  From its own depths, and rest within you, dear,
  As, through the billowy voices yearning here,
Great Nature strives to find a human speech.

A sonnet is a wave of melody:
  From heaving waters of the impassioned soul
  A billow of tidal music one and whole
Flows in the "octave"; then, returning free,
  Its ebbing surges in the "sestet" roll
Back to the deeps of Life's tumultuous sea.

Theodore Watts-Dunton (1836-1914)

CHAPTER VIII

THE OLD FRENCH FORMS

No false constraint be thine!
But, for right walking, choose
The fine,
The strict cothurnus, Muse.
Alfred Noyes: "Art" (from the French of Théophile Gautier)

The past half-century has seen established in English a number of poetic forms even more rigid than the sonnet in structural requirements. The fact that most of these forms were zealously cultivated in the pre-classic period of French literature has led to their being described by the term "Old French." Although poems of this general type had been composed by Chaucer, who, living at the court of Edward III, was under French influence, it was not until 1871 that the revival of interest occurred. In modern English the most celebrated makers of these rigid molds of thought have been British—Andrew Lang, Austin Dobson, and William Ernest Henley. Around New York, however, worthy examples have been produced, notably by Brander Matthews, Henry Cuyler Bunner, Frank Dempster Sherman, Edwin Arlington Robinson, and—more recently—Louis Untermeyer. As a result of fifty years of dissemination, the types can no longer be said to be strictly exotic. Of the numerous kinds men-

tioned in more detailed studies, the ballade and the rondeau are undoubtedly the most important, their nearest rivals being the triolet and the villanelle. Others not infrequently met with are the rondel, the roundel, the pantoum, and the sestina. Variants of these, together with still other forms, are discussed and exemplified in Gleeson White's excellent book, *Ballades and Rondeaus*.

The *ballade*, the nearest rival to the sonnet in expressing serious thought in a pleasing stereotyped mold, can best be discussed after a few examples have been read. Our first specimen is taken from Lang's *Ballades in Blue China*, a volume characterized by its marked finish of workmanship and its presupposition of culture on the part of the reader. The "Ballade to Theocritus" expresses the power of poetry to enable a reader to transcend his surroundings. Sicily was a seat of late Greek wealth and culture. Theocritus, a Sicilian Greek of the third century B. C., was the "father" of pastoral poetry.

BALLADE TO THEOCRITUS, IN WINTER

Ah! leave the smoke, the wealth, the roar
Of London, and the bustling street,
For still, by the Sicilian shore,
The murmur of the Muse is sweet.
Still, still, the suns of summer greet
The mountain-grave of Helikê,
And shepherds still their songs repeat
Where breaks the blue Sicilian sea.

What though they worship Pan no more,
That guarded once the shepherd's seat,
They chatter of their rustic lore,

They watch the wind among the wheat:
Cicalas chirp, the young lambs bleat,
Where whispers pine to cypress tree;
They count the waves that idly beat
Where breaks the blue Sicilian sea.

Theocritus! thou canst restore
The pleasant years, and over-fleet;
With thee we live as men of yore,
We rest where running waters meet:
And then we turn unwilling feet
And seek the world—so must it be—
We may not linger in the heat
Where breaks the blue Sicilian sea!

Envoy

Master,—when rain, and snow, and sleet
And northern winds are wild, to thee
We come, we rest in thy retreat,
Where breaks the blue Sicilian sea!

Andrew Lang (1844-1912)

From *Ballades in Blue China* is taken also the following superb poem. The Southern Cross is the polar constellation of the southern hemisphere.

BALLADE OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS

Fair islands of the silver fleece,
Hoards of unsunned, uncounted gold,
Whose havens are the haunts of Peace,
Whose boys are in our quarrel bold;
Our bolt is shot, our tale is told,
Our ship of state in storms may toss,
But ye are young if we are old,
Ye Islands of the Southern Cross!

Ay, *we* may dwindle and decrease,
Such fates the ruthless years unfold;
And yet we shall not wholly cease,
We shall not perish unconsoled;
Nay, still shall freedom keep her hold
Within the sea's inviolate fosse,
And boast her sons of English mould,
Ye Islands of the Southern Cross!

All empires tumble—Rome and Greece—
Their swords are rust, their altars cold!
For us, the Children of the Seas,
Who ruled where'er the waves have rolled.
For us, in Fortune's book enscrolled,
I read no runes of hopeless loss;
Nor—while *ye* last—our knell is tolled,
Ye Islands of the Southern Cross!

Envoy

Britannia, when thy hearth's a-cold,
When o'er thy grave has grown the moss,
Still *Rule Australia* shall be trolled
In Islands of the Southern Cross!

Andrew Lang (1844-1912)

The poem we quote below holds a high place among tributes to the heroes of old. Although Dobson uses the term *ballad*, *ballade* should be used; for the former term has been preëmpted, as shown in Chapter VI, by an entirely different type of poem.

A BALLAD OF HEROES

Because you passed, and now are not—
Because, in some remoter day,
Your sacred dust from doubtful spot

Was blown of ancient airs away,—
Because you perished, must men say
Your deeds were naught, and so profane
Your lives with that cold burden? Nay,
The deeds you wrought are not in vain!

Though, it may be, above the plot
That hid your once imperial clay,
No greener than o'er men forgot
The unregarding grasses sway;—
Though there no sweeter is the lay
From careless bird,—though you remain
Without distinction of decay,—
The deeds you wrought are not in vain!

No. For while yet in tower or cot
Your story stirs the pulses' play;
And men forget the sordid lot—
The sordid care, of cities gray;—
While yet beset in homelier fray,
They learn from you the lesson plain
That Life may go, so Honour stay,—
The deeds you wrought are not in vain!

Envoy

Heroes of old! I humbly lay
The laurel on your graves again;
Whatever men have done, men may,—
The deeds you wrought are not in vain.

Austin Dobson (1840-1921)

"The Prodigals" not only exhibits the form, but, with its consciously archaic background and diction, reflects the tone of the typical medieval ballade.

THE PRODIGALS

"Princes!—and you, most valorous,
Nobles and Barons of all degrees!
Hearken awhile to the prayer of us,—
Beggars that come from the over-seas!
Nothing we ask or of gold or fees;
Harry us not with the hounds we pray;
Lo,—for the surcote's hem we seize,—
Give us—ah! give us—but Yesterday!"

"Dames most delicate, amorous!
Damosels blithe as the belted bees!
Hearken awhile to the prayer of us,—
Beggars that come from the over-seas!
Nothing we ask of the things that please;
Weary are we, and worn, and gray;
Lo,—for we clutch and we clasp your knees,—
Give us—ah! give us—but Yesterday!"

"Damosels—Dames, be piteous!"
(But the dames rode fast by the roadway trees.)
"Hear us, O Knights magnanimous!"
(But the knights pricked on in their panoplies.)
Nothing they gat or of hope or ease,
But only to beat on the breast and say:—
"Life we drank to the dregs and lees;
Give us—ah! give us—but Yesterday!"

Envoy

Youth, take heed to the prayer of these!
Many there be by the dusty way,—
Many that cry to the rocks and seas
"Give us—ah! give us—but Yesterday!"

Austin Dobson (1840-1921)

As famous as any ballade in English is Rossetti's structurally irregular "Ballad of Dead Ladies," a translation from the French of the vagabond poet, François Villon (1431-1465?). Lang's translation of the same poem, though more literal and correct structurally, is less well known. The "ladies" are from medieval romance and from history, the most famous, perhaps, being Héloise, whom Pope celebrated in his *Epistle from Eloisa to Abelard;* Bertha, the mother of Charlemagne; and Joan of Arc.

THE BALLAD OF DEAD LADIES

Tell me now in what hidden way is
  Lady Flora, the lovely Roman?
Where's Hipparchia, and where is Thaïs,
  Neither of them the fairer woman?
  Where is Echo, beheld of no man,
Only heard on river and mere,—
  She whose beauty was more than human? . . .
But where are the snows of yester-year?

Where's Héloise, the learned nun,
  For whose sake Abeillard, I ween,
Lost manhood and put priesthood on?
  (From love he won such dule and teen!)
  And where, I pray you, is the Queen
Who willed that Buridan should steer
  Sewed in a sack's mouth down the Seine? . . .
But where are the snows of yester-year?

White Queen Blanche, like a queen of lilies,
  With a voice like any mermaiden,—

Bertha Broadfoot, Beatrice, Alice,
  And Ermengarde, the lady of Maine,—
  And that good Joan whom Englishmen
At Rouen doomed and burned her there,—
  Mother of God, where are they then? . . .
But where are the snows of yester-year?

Envoy

Nay, never ask this week, fair lord,
  Where they are gone, nor yet this year,
Except with this for an overword,—
  But where are the snows of yester-year?

Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882)

From an examination of the first three specimens quoted above, it will be seen that the ballade consists of three eight-line stanzas followed by a quatrain termed the *envoy*. The last line of each of the four divisions is identical—a refrain. Distinguishing this line by *C* the rime scheme may be described by the formula *3ababbcbC* plus *bcbC*. Except in the refrain no rime word in a ballade should be repeated. The rime is thus difficult, and writers are sorely tempted to repeat a rime or line—as is done in "The Prodigals"—or to use more than three rimes, as in "The Ballad of Dead Ladies." Such departures are, however, to be looked at askance. Legitimate departures are, as is shown below, in the direction of greater complication. Modern English ballades normally follow the old French example of addressing, in the first line of the envoy, a patron, or other person, or an abstraction. In each specimen here quoted the custom is

observed. The meter of the common type of ballade varies, but iambic tetrameter is the more usual form. Note, however, the anapestic movement of "The Prodigals."

In addition to the normal ballade type, there are several variants. The envoy is sometimes omitted. Dobson's "Ballad of Prose and Rhyme" has the metrical scheme *3abaBbcbC* plus *bBcC*—that is, it has a double refrain. One of a fairly abundant class is Swinburne's "Ballad of François Villon," which consists of three ten-line stanzas with a five-line envoy, the whole on four rimes, *3ababbccdcD* plus *ccdcD*. Theoretically, this type of ballade with its ten-line stanzas should always be written in pentameters (ten syllables) just as the ballade with eight-line stanzas should always be written in tetrameters (eight syllables), but these rules are not strictly adhered to. The *double ballade* consists of six stanzas in three rimes, but usually omits the envoy; examples are Swinburne's "Double Ballad of Good Counsel" and "Double Ballad of August." Alfred Noyes has written "A Triple Ballad of Old Japan." "King Boreas" by Clinton Scollard is an example of the *chant royal*—*5ababccddedE* plus *ddedE*—an elaborate form of the ballade type. The best effects have, however, been achieved in the normal ballade structure.

Because of the modern revival of the form, Chaucer's "balades" are of unusual interest. Several consist of rime-royal stanzas linked by refrain, the last stanza being often called the envoy. The following, however, except for the missing envoy, comes near to being a perfect ballade according to the modern conventions.

XII. TO ROSEMOUNDE. A BALADE

Madame, ye ben of al beautè shryne
As fer as cercled is the mappemounde;
For as the cristal glorious ye shyne,
And lyke ruby ben your chekes rounde.
Therwith ye ben so mery and so jocunde,
That at a revel whan that I see you daunce,
It is an oynement unto my wounde,
Thogh ye to me ne do no daliaunce.

For thogh I wepe of teres ful a tyne,
Yet may that wo myn herte nat confounde;
Your seemly voys that ye so smal outtwyne
Maketh my thoght in joye and blis habounde.
So curteisly I go, with lovë bounde,
That to my-self I sey, in my penaunce,
Suffyseth me to love you, Rosemounde,
Thogh ye to me ne do no daliaunce.

Nas never pyk walwed in galauntyne
As I in love am walwed and y-wounde;
For which full ofte I of my-self divyne
That I am trewe Tristam the secounde.
My love may not refreyd be nor afounde;
I brenne ay in an amorous plesaunce.
Do what you list, I wil your thral be founde,
Thogh ye to me ne do no daliaunce.

Geoffrey Chaucer (1340?-1400)

Among the stricter forms, the *rondeau* rivals the ballade in dignity. "In Flanders Fields," undoubtedly the best known rondeau in the language, was written by a Canadian lieutenant-colonel during the World War. It appeared first in *Punch.*

IN FLANDERS FIELDS

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
  That mark our place; and in the sky
  The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
  Loved and were loved, and now we lie
    In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe;
To you from failing hands we throw
  The torch; be yours to hold it high.
  If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
    In Flanders fields.

John McCrae (1872-1918)

We quote another superb rondeau by a British colonial, Eliot Napier of Australasia:

ALL MEN ARE FREE

All men are free and equal born
Before the Law!" So runs the worn
  And specious, lying, parrot-cry.
  All men are free—to starve or sigh;
But few to feed on Egypt's corn.

There toils the sweated slave, forlorn;
There weeps the babe with hunger torn;
  Dear God, forgive us for the lie—
    "All men are free!"

That man may laugh while this must mourn;
One's heir to honour, one to scorn—
  Were they born free? Were you? Was I?
  No! Not when born, but when they die
And of their robes—or rags—are shorn,
    All men are free!

Eliot Napier

Austin Dobson wrote a number of graceful and dignified rondeaus which did much to popularize the form. "In After Days" is unsurpassed. It was widely quoted after the author's death in 1921.

IN AFTER DAYS

In after days when grasses high
O'er-top the stone where I shall lie,
  Though ill or well the world adjust
  My slender claim to honoured dust,
I shall not question nor reply.

I shall not see the morning sky;
I shall not hear the night-wind sigh;
  I shall be mute, as all men must
    In after days!

But yet, now living, fain were I
That some one then should testify,
  Saying—*He held his pen in trust*
  To Art, not serving shame or lust.
Will none? Then let my memory die
    In after days!

Austin Dobson (1840-1921)

The process of rondeau-making is cleverly stated by Austin Dobson in a rondeau, "You Bid Me Try." The rime scheme is *aabba aabR aabbaR*, *R* indicating the refrain which is always a repetition of the first part of the first line of the poem, and is usually identical with the title. In modern English the rondeau is a rigid type; a deviation from it might result in an acceptable poem, but not in a true rondeau.

The rondeau is, like the ballade, used for light as well as for serious subjects and is a frequent vehicle for *vers de société*. In Untermeyer's "A Burlesque Rondo"—a paraphrase from Horace—the refrain remains the same in sound while it varies in meaning: "Cum tu, Lydia," "Come to Lydia," and "Come to! Lydia." Frank D. Sherman's "An Acrostical Valentine" is a remarkable *tour de force*. The initial letters of the lines (excluding the refrain) spell the name of the author.

Dobson is the author of the most felicitous *rondels* in English. We quote "The Wanderer" and "Vitas Hinnuleo." Note that there are but two rimes and that the first two lines of the poem constitute a refrain, half of which may be omitted in the last division of the poem. The two rime orders shown below are typical, the scheme *ABab baAB ababAB* being perhaps most common.

THE WANDERER

Love comes back to his vacant dwelling,—
The old, old love that we knew of yore!
We see him stand by the open door,
With his great eyes, and his bosom swelling.

He makes as though in our arms repelling
  He fain would lie as he lay before;—
  Love comes back to his vacant dwelling,—
The old, old love that we knew of yore!

Ah, who shall help us from over-spelling
  That sweet forgotten, forbidden lore!
  E'en as we doubt in our heart once more,
With a rush of tears to our eyelids welling,
  Love comes back to his vacant dwelling.

Austin Dobson (1840-1921)

The odes of Horace have always lured the English poet-translator. In his recent engaging volume, *Including Horace*, Louis Untermeyer has two paraphrases of "Vitas Hinnuleo"—an ode which Dobson made into a perfect rondel.

VITAS HINNULEO

You shun me, Chloe, wild and shy
  As some stray fawn that seeks its mother
Through trackless woods. If spring winds sigh,
  It vainly strives its fears to smother;—

Its trembling knees assail each other
  When lizards stir the bramble dry;—
You shun me, Chloe, wild and shy
  As some stray fawn that seeks its mother.

And yet no Libyan lion I,—
  No ravening thing to rend another;
Lay by your tears, your tremors by—
  A Husband's better than a brother;

Nor shun me, Chloe, wild and shy
As some stray fawn that seeks its mother.
Austin Dobson (1840-1921)

For his own use, Swinburne invented the *roundel*, a variant on the rondeau. In a hundred examples, *A Century of Roundels*, he employed a wide variety of line-lengths and meters, but never varied from the number of lines, the type of refrain, and the rime-scheme shown in this example. "A Baby's Feet" is grouped with "A Baby's Hands" and "A Baby's Eyes" under the title "Étude Réaliste."

A BABY'S FEET

A baby's feet, like sea-shells pink,
Might tempt, should heaven see meet,
An angel's lips to kiss, we think,
A baby's feet.

Like rose-hued sea-flowers toward the heat
They stretch and spread and wink
Their ten soft buds that part and meet.

No flower-bells that expand and shrink
Gleam half so heavenly sweet
As shine on life's untrodden brink
A baby's feet.
Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909)

The most airy of the fixed forms is the *triolet*. The name refers to the triple recurrence of the first line. The rime and refrain scheme, *ABaAabAB*, is always adhered to, but the meter is varied in different examples. A

felicitous effect depends on the naturalness of the repetition, a difficult matter in so short a poem. We quote from "Rose-Leaves" a perfect example entitled

A KISS

Rose kissed me to-day.
  Will she kiss me to-morrow?
Let it be as it may,
  Rose kissed me to-day.
But the pleasure gives way
  To a savour of sorrow;—
Rose kissed me to-day,—
  Will she kiss me to-morrow?

Austin Dobson (1840-1921)

Of nearly equal structural perfection is Bunner's widely quoted, wistful "A Pitcher of Mignonette." A variation in the first few syllables of the repeated lines is permissible.

A PITCHER OF MIGNONETTE

A pitcher of mignonette
  In a tenement's highest casement:
Queer sort of a flower-pot—yet
That pitcher of mignonette
Is a garden in heaven set,
  To the little sick child in the basement—
The pitcher of mignonette
  In the tenement's highest casement.

Henry Cuyler Bunner (1855-1896)

The *villanelle*, a difficult but beautiful form, is, as may be seen by a scrutiny of the two following specimens, a poem of nineteen lines and two rimes. The first line of

the first stanza becomes the last line of the second and fourth stanzas. The third line of the first stanza becomes the last line of the third and fifth stanzas. The two refrains make a quatrain of the last stanza. Since they rime together, let *A* stand for the first and *A′* for the second. The scheme may then be described by the formula *AbA′ abA abA′ abA abA′ abAA′*. More than five tercets are occasionally found. The meter varies, but is usually iambic. The second villanelle below describes the form of which it is a pleasing example.

WHEN I SAW YOU LAST, ROSE

When I saw you last, Rose,
  You were only so high;—
How fast the time goes!

Like a bud ere it blows,
  You just peeped at the sky,
When I saw you last, Rose!

Now your petals unclose,
  Now your May-time is nigh;—
How fast the time goes!

And a life,—how it grows!
  You were scarcely so shy,
When I saw you last, Rose!

In your bosom it shows
  There's a guest on the sly;
(How fast the time goes!)

Is it Cupid? Who knows!
Yet you used not to sigh,
When I saw you last, Rose;—
How fast the time goes!

Austin Dobson (1840-1921)

VILLANELLE

A dainty thing's the Villanelle.
Sly, musical, a jewel in rhyme,
It serves its purpose passing well.

A double-clappered silver bell
That must be made to clink in chime,
A dainty thing's the Villanelle;

And if you wish to flute a spell,
Or ask a meeting 'neath the lime,
It serves its purpose passing well.

You must not ask of it the swell
Of organs grandiose and sublime—
A dainty thing's the Villanelle;

And, filled with sweetness, as a shell
Is filled with sound, and launched in time,
It serves its purpose passing well.

Still fair to see and good to smell
As in the quaintness of its prime,
A dainty thing's the Villanelle,
It serves its purpose passing well.

William Ernest Henley (1849-1903)

The chief characteristic of the *pantoum* is the repetition of each line. The second and fourth lines of a stanza

recur respectively as the first and third of the following, the endless chain being usually completed by a return to the first line of the poem. The meter varies, and there may be any number of stanzas. In ultimate origin, the pantoum is not French, but Malaysian. Because of its structure, its field is very limited. It is normally used for a monotonous subject, well-known examples being "In Town" by Austin Dobson, and "En Route" by Brander Matthews. "In the Sultan's Garden" is colorful and dramatic, and repeats the lines in a natural manner.

IN THE SULTAN'S GARDEN

She oped the portal of the palace,
  She stole into the garden's gloom;
From every spotless snowy chalice
  The lilies breathed a sweet perfume.

She stole into the garden's gloom,
  She thought that no one would discover;
The lilies breathed a sweet perfume,
  She swiftly ran to meet her lover.

She thought that no one would discover,
  But footsteps followed ever near;
She swiftly ran to meet her lover
  Beside the fountain crystal clear.

But footsteps followed ever near;
  Ah, who is that she sees before her
Beside the fountain crystal clear?
  'Tis not her hazel-eyed adorer.

Ah, who is that she sees before her,
  His hand upon his scimitar?
'Tis not her hazel-eyed adorer,
  It is her lord of Candahar!

His hand upon his scimitar,—
  Alas, what brought such dread disaster!
It is her lord of Candahar,
  The fierce Sultan, her lord and master.

Alas, what brought such dread disaster!
  "Your pretty lover's dead!" he cries—
  The fierce Sultan, her lord and master.
  " 'Neath yonder tree his body lies."

"Your pretty lover's dead!" he cries—
  (A sudden, ringing voice behind him);
" 'Neath yonder tree his body lies——"
  "Die, lying dog! go thou and find him!"

A sudden, ringing voice behind him,
  A deadly blow, a moan of hate,
"Die, lying dog! go thou and find him!
  Come, love, our steeds are at the gate!"

A deadly blow, a moan of hate,
  His blood ran red as wine in chalice;
"Come, love, our steeds are at the gate!"
  She oped the portal of the palace.

Clinton Scollard (1860-)

Like the pantoum, the *sestina* is a *tour de force* of relatively rare occurrence in English. Kipling's "Sestina of the Tramp Royal" is a good example. More delicately graceful is Edmund Gosse's

SESTINA

TO F. H.

In fair Provence, the land of lute and rose,
Arnaut, great master of the lore of love,
First wrought sestines to win his lady's heart;
For she was deaf when simpler staves he sang,
And for her sake he broke the bonds of rhyme,
And in this subtler measure hid his woe.

"Harsh be my lines," cried Arnaut, "harsh the woe,
My lady, that enthron'd and cruel rose,
Inflicts on him that made her live in rhyme!"
But through the meter spake the voice of Love,
And like a wild-wood nightingale he sang
Who thought in crabbèd lays to ease his heart.

It is not told if her untoward heart
Was melted by her poet's lyric woe,
Or if in vain so amorously he sang.
Perchance through crowd of dark conceits he rose
To nobler heights of philosophic love,
And crowned his later years with sterner rhyme.

This thing alone we know: the triple rhyme,
Of him who bared his vast and passionate heart
To all the crossing flames of hate and love,
Wears in the midst of all its storm of woe,—
As some loud morn of March may bear a rose,—
The impress of a song that Arnaut sang.

"Smith of his mother-tongue," the Frenchman sang
Of Lancelot and Galahad, the rhyme
That beat so bloodlike at its core of rose,
It stirred the sweet Francesca's gentle heart

To take that kiss that brought her so much woe,
And sealed in fire her martydrom of love.

And Dante, full of her immortal love,
Stayed his drear song, and softly, fondly sang
As though his voice broke with that weight of woe;
And to this day we think of Arnaut's rhyme
Whenever pity at the labouring heart
On fair Francesca's memory drops the rose.

Ah! sovereign Love, forgive this weaker rhyme!
The men of old who sang were great at heart,
Yet have we too known woe, and worn thy rose.

Edmund Gosse (1849-)

From reading the above poem it will be seen that not rime but repetition of end words characterizes the sestina. The end-words of the first line are repeated in an order which will permit the last end-word of each stanza to be the first end-word of the next, the sequence being 123456, 615243, 364125, 532614, 451362, 246531. The three-line envoy has three of the terminal-words at the ends, the others earlier in the lines. The end-words sometimes rime, and the arrangement here outlined is not always followed. This exotic form vies with the chant royal in difficulty of structure. In theory, the end-words should be important nouns, which are turned and re-turned in the dreaming mind of the poet. The use of the verb *rose* for the noun in the third stanza should thus be regarded as a flaw in a careful piece of workmanship.

In conclusion, mention by name should be made of a few other structural types. *Kyrielle* is a term sometimes applied to a series of quatrains linked by a common

fourth line. In *chain verse* the last line of one stanza becomes the first line of the next; more rarely, the last word of one stanza becomes the first word of the next. The *rondeau redoublé*, *glose*, *lay*, *virelai*, *Sicilian octave*, and other rare forms deserve no place in an anthology of limited scope. The bibliography contains suggestions for further study.

It is interesting to note that foreign languages are still being exploited for structural forms suitable for adaptation in English. It is quite possible, for instance, that Witter Bynner, Amy Lowell, or some other modern poet may find in Japanese or Chinese poetry a form worthy of permanent cultivation in English. Experiments and innovations have been numerous of late. The extravagant restraint of the artificial forms and the unrestraint of free verse are the extreme right and the extreme left in the poetry of today.

CHAPTER IX

LIGHT VERSE

I would be the Lyric
Ever on the lip,
Rather than the Epic
Memory lets slip.
Thomas Bailey Aldrich: "Lyrics and Epics"

In "The Day is Done" which was prefixed to *The Waif*, a collection of poems by minor poets, Longfellow eloquently defended the humbler poets, whom we sometimes choose to read rather than "the grand old masters,"

the bards sublime
Whose distant footsteps echo
Through the corridors of Time.

Indeed, there is more than one kind of poetry in which the lesser poets, like Longfellow and Aldrich, are the masters. This, as we have seen, is true of patriotic songs and the French forms; and it is equally true of light verse. The great poet, Wordsworth or Milton for instance, is generally too deeply in earnest, too passionate, sometimes too unsocial to write what must seem to him mere literary small talk. In fact, the major poets who have tried to trip it on the light fantastic toe have nearly

always failed. In spite of an apparent ease, "the familiar [style] is," as Cowper pointed out, "of all styles the most difficult to succeed in." Only the poet who is also a man of the world like Holmes or Thackeray can produce these "immortal ephemeræ."

The most important form of lighter poetry is that usually called *vers de société*. Since an example is often more enlightening than a definition, let us first examine a fairly typical poem of this kind. Bret Harte, although most people remember him only for his stories, was also a poet of considerable importance. In "Her Letter" the daughter of a gold miner who has "struck it rich" is writing from New York to her sweetheart in California.

HER LETTER

I'm sitting alone by the fire,
  Dressed just as I came from the dance,
In a robe *even* you would admire,—
  It cost a cool thousand in France;
I'm be-diamonded out of all reason,
  My hair is done up in a queue:
In short, sir, "the belle of the season"
  Is wasting an hour upon you.

A dozen engagements I've broken;
  I left in the midst of a set;
Likewise a proposal, half spoken,
  That waits—on the stairs—for me yet.
They say he'll be rich,—when he grows up,—
  And then he adores me indeed.
And you, sir, are turning your nose up,
  Three thousand miles off, as you read.

"And how do I like my position?"
"And what do I think of New York?"
"And now, in my higher ambition,
With whom do I waltz, flirt, or talk?"
"And isn't it nice to have riches,
And diamonds and silks, and all that?"
"And aren't they a change to the ditches
And tunnels of Poverty Flat?"

Well, yes,—if you saw us out driving
Each day in the park, four-in-hand,—
If you saw poor dear mamma contriving
To look supernaturally grand,—
If you saw papa's picture, as taken
By Brady, and tinted at that,—
You'd never suspect he sold bacon
And flour at Poverty Flat.

And yet, just this moment, when sitting
In the glare of the grand chandelier,—
In the bustle and glitter befitting
The "finest *soirée* of the year,"—
In the mists of a *gauze de Chambéry,*
And the hum of the smallest of talk,—
Somehow, Joe, I thought of the "Ferry,"
And the dance that we had on "The Fork";

Of Harrison's barn, with its muster
Of flags festooned over the wall;
Of the candles that shed their soft lustre
And tallow on head-dress and shawl;
Of the steps that we took to one fiddle;
Of the dress of my queer *vis-à-vis;*
And how I once went down the middle
With the man that shot Sandy McGee;

Of the moon that was quietly sleeping
On the hill when the time came to go;
Of the few baby peaks that were peeping
From under their bed-clothes of snow;
Of that ride,—that to me was the rarest;
Of—the something you said at the gate.
Ah, Joe, then I wasn't an heiress
To "the best-paying lead in the State."

Well, well, it's all past; yet it's funny
To think, as I stood in the glare
Of fashion and beauty and money,
That I should be thinking, right there,
Of some one who breasted high water,
And swam the North Fork, and all that,
Just to dance with old Folinsbee's daughter,
The Lily of Poverty Flat.

But goodness! what nonsense I'm writing!
(Mamma says my taste still is low,)
Instead of my triumphs reciting,
I'm spooning on Joseph,—heigh-ho!
And I'm to be "finished" by travel,—
Whatever's the meaning of that,—
Oh! why did papa strike pay gravel
In drifting on Poverty Flat?

Good night,—here's the end of my paper;
Good night,—if the longitude please,—
For maybe, while wasting my taper,
Your sun's climbing over the trees.
But know, if you haven't got riches,
And are poor, dearest Joe, and all that,
That my heart's somewhere there in the ditches,
And you've struck it,—on Poverty Flat.

Francis Bret Harte (1836-1902)

Clearly this is not the poetry of passionate love; it is not the language of Burns's "Highland Mary" or of Mrs. Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese*. Nor is it the poetry of great thought or of lofty enthusiasm. *Vers de société* is to greater poetry what the miniature and the cameo are to the paintings of Raphael and the statues of Michael Angelo. One should not, however, make the mistake of regarding such poems as mere trifles. *Vers de société*, like the French forms, is one of the lesser divisions of poetry, but no lover of poetry should consider his taste wholly catholic until he can admire all kinds, small as well as great.

Although all the names which have been suggested for what the French call *vers de société* are unsatisfactory, it is worth while to mention some of them because each throws light on the nature of the type. The French phrase, for which *society verse* and *social verse* are inadequate translations, is doubly objectionable because it is foreign and because it leads one to draw the mistaken inference that French poetry is richer than English in poetry of this type. *Lyra Elegantiarum*, which Locker-Lampson used as the title of his famous anthology of English *vers de société*, is open to similar objections. *Familiar verse*, which Brander Matthews borrowed from Cowper for his excellent anthology, *American Familiar Verse*, is the least inadequate English name, but it too strongly suggests informality. *Gentle verse*, suggested by Carolyn Wells, and *patrician rhymes*, suggested by Edmund Clarence Stedman, emphasize the fact that *vers de société* is essentially the poetry of the *salon*, of well-bred society. *Occasional verse* is the least satisfactory

term of all, for poems written for special occasions are as varied in type as Lowell's "Under the Old Elm," an ode; Emerson's "Concord Hymn," a song; and Milton's *Comus*, a masque. Partly because other names are unsatisfactory and partly because we wish to include in this chapter poems not strictly to be classed as *vers de société*, we have called this chapter Light Verse.

There is little agreement among authorities as to the limitations in form and subject matter of *vers de société*. The poem may be cast in the form of a letter, a song, a toast, an epitaph, a ballade, an autograph. The subject matter is generally social in nature. The poet writes most often perhaps of love in its lighter moods; but the theater, books, friends, children, animals, and many other subjects are also open to him. The true criterion, it seems evident, is neither form nor subject but style. Frederick Locker-Lampson, in the preface to his *Lyra Elegantiarum*, has admirably characterized the style of *vers de société*. Poems of this type, says he, "should be short, elegant, refined, and fanciful, not seldom distinguished by chastened sentiment, and often playful. The tone should not be pitched high; it should be idiomatic, and rather in the conversational key; the rhythm should be crisp and sparkling, and the rhyme frequent and never forced, while the entire poem should be marked by tasteful moderation, high finish, and completeness . . . the two qualities of brevity and buoyancy are absolutely essential. The poem may be tinctured with a well-bred philosophy, it may be gay and gallant, it may be playfully malicious or tenderly ironical, it may display lively banter, and it may be sarcastically facetious . . . but it must never be

ponderous or commonplace." "In fine," as Stedman sums up the matter, "the true kind is marked by humor, by spontaneity, joined with extreme elegance of finish, by the quality we call breeding,—above all, by lightness of touch." To these definitions we may add the Twelve Good Rules drawn up by Austin Dobson, the greatest recent writer of light verse:—"1. Never be vulgar. 2. Avoid slang and puns. 3. Avoid inversions. 4. Be sparing of long words. 5. Be colloquial but not commonplace. 6. Choose the lightest and brightest of measures. 7. Let the rimes be frequent but not forced. 8. Let them be rigorously exact to the ear. 9. Be as witty as you like. 10. Be serious by accident. 11. Be pathetic with the greatest discretion. 12. Never ask if the writer of these rules has observed them himself."

One of the later New England poets, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, at one time editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, wrote much graceful verse in lighter vein. The following poem, in form a dramatic monologue in which a lover is bidding his sweetheart goodnight, treats love in a mood similar to that of "Her Letter." The Spanish title means "endearing words."

PALABRAS CARIÑOSAS

Good-night! I have to say good-night
To such a host of peerless things!
Good-night unto the slender hand
All queenly with its weight of rings;
Good-night to fond, uplifted eyes,
Good-night to chestnut braids of hair,
Good-night unto the perfect mouth,

And all the sweetness nestled there—
The snowy hand detains me, then
I'll have to say good-night again!

But there will come a time, my love,
When, if I read our stars aright,
I shall not linger by this porch
With my farewells. Till then, good-night!
You wish the time were now? And I.
You do not blush to wish it so?
You would have blushed yourself to death
To own so much a year ago—
What, both these snowy hands! ah, then
I'll have to say good-night again!
Thomas Bailey Aldrich (*1836-1907*)

Vers de société often handles the theme of love in a satiric, half-cynical fashion. The Irish poet, Tom Moore, has struck this note in one of his songs, from which we quote the first stanza:

The time I've lost in wooing,
In watching and pursuing
The light that lies
In woman's eyes,
Has been my heart's undoing.
Tho' wisdom oft has sought me,
I scorn'd the lore she brought me,
My only books
Were woman's looks,
And folly's all they taught me.

The most famous poem of this kind is Robert Herrick's "To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time." Aldrich called Herrick "a great little poet,"—a term which might well

be applied to himself. Herrick, who in his youth was apprenticed to a goldsmith, loved to polish his miniature poems as a jeweler might delight in carving a cameo.

TO THE VIRGINS, TO MAKE MUCH OF TIME

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying;
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
The higher he's a-getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse and worst
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And while ye may, go marry;
For, having lost but once your prime,
You may forever tarry.

Robert Herrick (1591-1674)

The disillusioned, satirical attitude toward youthful love is nothing new. It is as old as the Roman poet Horace and as recent as yesterday's *Life* and *Punch*. The poems of the great Augustan have tempted many imitators and translators, Milton and Pope among many others. More recent poets, however, have better rendered the light, graceful banter of Horace's verse. In the

following poem Eugene Field, whose translations from Horace are among the best, protests against the traditional class-room attitude toward Horace. Field was one of the earliest modern American newspaper poets. With few exceptions, the best American light verse of the last decade has been written by later newspaper "colyumists" like Franklin P. Adams, Christopher Morley, Don Marquis, and Bert Leston Taylor.

THE TRUTH ABOUT HORACE

It is very aggravating
To hear the solemn prating
Of the fossils who are stating
  That old Horace was a prude;
When we know that with the ladies
He was always raising Hades,
And with many an escapade his
  Best productions are imbued.

There's really not much harm in a
Large number of his carmina,
But these people find alarm in a
  Few records of his acts;
So they'd squelch the muse caloric,
And to students sophomoric
They'd present as metaphoric
  What old Horace meant for facts.

We have always thought 'em lazy;
Now we adjudge 'em crazy!
Why, Horace was a daisy
  That was very much alive!
And the wisest of us know him
As his Lydia verses show him,—

Go, read that virile poem,—
It is No. 25.

He was a very owl, sir,
And starting out to prowl, sir,
You bet he made Rome howl, sir,
Until he filled his date;
With a massic-laden ditty
And a classic maiden pretty,
He painted up the city,
And Maecenas paid the freight!

Eugene Field (*1850-1895*)

Louis Untermeyer, whose lighter verse is equaled by that of no other living American poet, has admirably translated many of Horace's famous odes in his *Including Horace.* Those familiar with the love affairs of college athletes will perhaps be surprised to find how much old Horace knew of human nature, which changes little from generation to generation.

QUESTIONING LYDIA

Lydia, dic, per omnis. . . . Book I: Ode 8

Lydia, why do you ruin by lavishing
Smiles upon Sybaris, filling his eye
Only with love, and the skilfully ravishing
Lydia. Why?

Ringing his voice was; above all the clamorous
Throng in the play-ground his own would be high.
Now it is changed; he is softened and amorous.
Lydia, why?

Once he was blithe and, as swift as a linnet, he
  Wrestled and swam, or on horse-back flew by.
Now he is dulled with this cursed femininity—
  Lydia, why?

Yes, he is changed—he is moody and servile, he
  Skulks like a coward and wishes to fly.
What, can you smile at his acting so scurvily,
  Lydia? . . . Why?

Louis Untermeyer (1885-)

The great American master of light verse is Oliver Wendell Holmes. No other American poet has quite equaled him in ease, polish, and wit. His "Contentment," "Dorothy Q," "My Aunt," and "The Deacon's Masterpiece" are all superb, but by common consent "The Last Leaf" is placed slightly above them. "The Last Leaf" was a favorite of Abraham Lincoln, who spoke of the fourth stanza as "inexpressibly touching." "For pure pathos, in my judgment," he said, "there is nothing finer than those six lines in the English language!" Indeed, the only fault one can find with them is that they are almost too full of feeling for *vers de société*.

THE LAST LEAF

I saw him once before,
As he passed by the door,
  And again
The pavement stones resound
As he totters o'er the ground
  With his cane.

They say that in his prime
Ere the pruning-knife of Time
Cut him down,
Not a better man was found
By the Crier on his round
Through the town.

But now he walks the streets,
And looks at all he meets
Sad and wan,
And he shakes his feeble head,
That it seems as if he said,
"They are gone."

The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has prest
In their bloom,
And the names he loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb.

My grandmama has said,—
Poor old lady, she is dead
Long ago,—
That he had a Roman nose,
And his cheek was like a rose
In the snow.

But now his nose is thin,
And it rests upon his chin
Like a staff,
And a crook is in his back,
And a melancholy crack
In his laugh.

I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
  At him here;
But the old three-cornered hat,
And the breeches, and all that,
  Are so queer!

And if I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree
  In the spring,—
Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old forsaken bough
  Where I cling.

Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809-1894)

Locker-Lampson, who half a century ago spoke of Holmes as "perhaps the best living writer of this species of verse," paid him the further compliment of borrowing the very unusual metrical form which Holmes had used in "The Last Leaf." By his use of the stanza Holmes contrived to suggest the tapping of an old man's cane, while Locker-Lampson tried to suggest the light patter of a lady's little feet.

MY MISTRESS'S BOOTS

They nearly strike me dumb,
And I tremble when they come
  Pit-a-pat:
This palpitation means
That these Boots are Geraldine's—
  Think of that!

Oh where did hunter win
So delectable a skin
  For her feet?

You lucky little kid,
You perish'd, so you did,
For my sweet!

The faery stitching gleams
On the sides, and in the seams,
And it shows
That the Pixies were the wags
Who tipt these funny tags,
And these toes.

The simpletons who squeeze
Their extremities to please
Mandarins,
Would positively flinch
From venturing to pinch
Geraldine's.

What soles to charm an elf!
Had Crusoe, sick of self,
Chanced to view
One printed near the tide,
Oh how hard he would have tried
For the two!

For Gerry's debonair,
And innocent and fair
As a rose:
She's an angel in a frock,
With a fascinating cock
To her nose.

Cinderella's lefts and rights
To Geraldine's were frights;
And, I trow,

The damsel, deftly shod,
Has dutifully trod
Until now.

Come, Gerry, since it suits
Such a pretty Puss (in Boots)
These to don,
Set this dainty hand awhile,
On my shoulder, dear, and I'll
Put them on.

Frederick Locker-Lampson (1821-1895)

Few women have excelled in writing *vers de société*, for what reason we cannot guess unless it is that few of them have tried. There are many things, however, which a woman can treat better than a man. No man, for instance, could possibly have written the poem which we quote from Josephine Preston Peabody (Mrs. Lionel Marks), a contemporary American poet and dramatist. No other poem expresses so well the feminine attitude toward dress.

"VANITY, SAITH THE PREACHER"

I love my little gowns;
I love my little shoes,
All standing still below them,
Set quietly by twos.

All day I wear them careless,
But when I put them by
They look so dear and different,
And yet I don't know why.

My oldest one of all,—
Worn out; and then the best;
But that I have not worn enough
To love it, like the rest.

The dimity for Sunday,
The blue one and the wool,
Now that I see them hanging up,
Are somehow beautiful.

Of all the white, with ribbons
Gray-green, if I could choose;
The fichu that helps everything
Be gay; and then, my shoes.

My shoes that skip and saunter,
And one that will untie:—
They look so funny and so young,
I hate to put them by.

I wonder,—if some day. . . .
All this will be the Past?—
Poor Hop-the-brook and Dance-with-me,
They cannot always last!

Josephine Preston Peabody (1874-)

During the last century and a half many poems have been written for children. The great majority of these do not come under the head of light verse, but much excellent light verse has been written about children. The first of the two poems which we quote was written by Matthew Prior, probably the best eighteenth century writer of light verse. The only defect in the poem is the unnatural poetic diction which Prior and his contemporaries could seldom escape.

TO A CHILD OF QUALITY FIVE YEARS OLD

Lords, knights, and 'squires, the numerous band,
That wear the fair Miss Mary's fetters,
Were summoned by her high command,
To show their passions by their letters.

My pen among the rest I took,
Lest those bright eyes that cannot read
Should dart their kindling fires, and look
The power they have to be obeyed.

Nor quality, nor reputation
Forbid me yet my flame to tell,
Dear five-years-old befriends my passion,
And I may write till she can spell.

For, while she makes her silk-worms beds
With all the tender things I swear;
Whilst all the house my passion reads,
In papers round her baby's hair;

She may receive and own my flame,
For, though the strictest prudes should know it,
She'll pass for a most virtuous dame.
And I for an unhappy poet.

Then too, alas! when she shall tear
The lines some younger rival sends;
She'll give me leave to write, I fear,
And we shall still continue friends.

For, as our different ages move,
'Tis so ordained, (would Fate but mend it!)
That I shall be past making love,
When she begins to comprehend it.

Matthew Prior (*1664-1721*)

Best known for his short stories, Henry Cuyler Bunner, long editor of *Puck*, was also of considerable importance in the history of *vers de société* and French forms. The following poem is one of the most charming light poems ever written about a child. All the stanzas are linked by a common rime scheme.

"ONE, TWO, THREE"

It was an old, old, old, old lady,
And a boy who was half past three;
And the way that they played together
Was beautiful to see.

She couldn't go running and jumping,
And the boy, no more could he,
For he was a thin little fellow,
With a thin, little, twisted knee.

They sat in the yellow sunlight,
Out under the maple-tree;
And the game that they played I'll tell you,
Just as it was told to me.

It was Hide-and-Go-Seek they were playing,
Though you'd never have known it to be—
With an old, old, old, old lady,
And a boy with a twisted knee.

The boy would bend his face down
On his one little sound right knee,
And he'd guess where she was hiding,
In guesses One, Two, Three!

"You are in the china-closet!"
He would cry, and laugh with glee—
It wasn't the china-closet;
But he still had Two and Three.

"You are up in Papa's big bedroom,
In the chest with the queer old key!"
And she said: "You are *warm* and *warmer;*
But you're not quite right," said she.

"It can't be the little cupboard
Where Mamma's things used to be—
So it must be the clothes-press, Gran'ma!"
And he found her with his Three.

Then she covered her face with her fingers,
That were wrinkled and white and wee,
And she guessed where the boy was hiding,
With a One and a Two and a Three.

And they never had stirred from their places,
Right under the maple-tree—
This old, old, old, old lady,
And the boy with the lame little knee—
This dear, dear, dear old lady,
And the boy who was half-past three.

Henry Cuyler Bunner (*1855-1896*)

Vers de société sometimes takes the form of a toast. Lord Byron, though he did not write much light verse, was the author of one of the best toasts in the language. The following poem was addressed to his friend, Thomas Moore, when Byron was leaving England for the last time.

TO THOMAS MOORE

My boat is on the shore,
And my bark is on the sea;
But, before I go, Tom Moore,
Here's a double health to thee!

Here's a sigh to those who love me,
And a smile to those who hate;
And, whatever sky's above me,
Here's a heart for every fate.

Though the ocean roar around me,
Yet it still shall bear me on;
Though a desert should surround me,
It hath springs that may be won.

Were't the last drop in the well,
As I gasp'd upon the brink,
Ere my fainting spirit fell,
'Tis to thee that I would drink.

With that water, as this wine,
The libation I would pour
Should be—peace with thine and mine,
And a health to thee, Tom Moore.

George Noel Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824)

Edward Coate Pinkney, a gifted young Maryland poet who died at the age of twenty-six, wrote what is probably the best of all toasts to a woman. Although the poem has several inferior lines, it is not unworthy of a place beside the Cavalier lyrics of Lovelace and Herrick. The sentimental extravagance of the poet's language

recalls the grandiloquent strain in which the old-fashioned Southern gentleman paid his compliments to "the fair sex."

A HEALTH

I fill this cup to one made up
  Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
  The seeming paragon;
To whom the better elements
  And kindly stars have given
A form so fair, that, like the air,
  'Tis less of earth than heaven.

Her every tone is music's own,
  Like those of morning birds,
And something more than melody
  Dwells ever in her words;
The coinage of her heart are they,
  And from her lips each flows
As one may see the burdened bee
  Forth issue from the rose.

Affections are as thoughts to her,
  The measures of her hours;
Her feelings have the fragrancy,
  The freshness of young flowers;
And lovely passions, changing oft,
  So fill her, she appears
The image of themselves by turns,—
  The idol of past years!

Of her bright face one glance will trace
  A picture on the brain,
And of her voice in echoing hearts
  A sound must long remain;

But memory, such as mine of her,
So very much endears,
When death is nigh my latest sigh
Will not be life's, but hers.

I fill this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon—
Her health! and would on earth there stood
Some more of such a frame,
That life might be all poetry,
And weariness a name.

Edward Coate Pinkney (*1802-1828*)

Vers de société and other forms of light verse have flourished best in prosaic periods like the first half of the eighteenth and the second half of the nineteenth centuries; the younger poets of today seldom attempt it. Pope, Gay, Prior, Swift, Cowper, and Goldsmith, all eighteenth century poets, excelled in light verse. Of the major Romantic poets, only Byron and Coleridge wrote light verse of importance; but Walter Savage Landor, a minor poet of this period, is represented by more poems in Locker-Lampson's anthology than any other poet. In the Victorian age Locker-Lampson, Thackeray, Praed, and Hood all wrote brilliant light verse. Among more recent English poets we must mention two poets no longer living, Andrew Lang and Austin Dobson. Besides the American poets already quoted,—Harte, Holmes, Aldrich, Field, Untermeyer, and Bunner,—mention must be made of Lowell, Saxe, and Stedman.

Nonsense verse is one of the most interesting varieties

of light verse in spite of the fact that it lacks the thought content of serious poetry. Like *vers de société*, it is difficult to write; for it takes a man of sense to write readable nonsense. The best known English writers of nonsense verse, all belonging to the nineteenth century, are Thomas Hood, Edward Lear, and Lewis Carroll (Charles L. Dodgson). Gelett Burgess and Oliver Herford are perhaps the most successful American authors of nonsense verse.

THE PURPLE COW

I never saw a Purple Cow,
I never hope to see one;
But I can tell you, anyhow,
I'd rather see than be one.

Gelett Burgess (1866-)

Nonsense verse has a logical consistency of its own; it must not be a wild, incoherent mixture of absurdities. The Pobble, in the following poem by Edward Lear, is a wholly imaginary creature; but both the Pobble and his Aunt Jobiska act very like boys and aunts whom all of us know.

THE POBBLE WHO HAS NO TOES

The Pobble who has no toes
Had once as many as we;
When they said, "Some day you may lose them all,"
He replied, "Fish fiddle de-dee!"
And his Aunt Jobiska made him drink
Lavender water tinged with pink;

For she said, "The World in general knows
There's nothing so good for a Pobble's toes!"

The Pobble who has no toes
  Swam across the Bristol Channel;
But before he set out he wrapped his nose
  In a piece of scarlet flannel.
For his Aunt Jobiska said, "No harm
Can come to his toes if his nose is warm;
And it's perfectly known that a Pobble's toes
Are safe—provided he minds his nose."

The Pobble swam fast and well,
  And when boats or ships came near him,
He tinkledy-binkledy-winkled a bell
  So that all the world could hear him.
And all the Sailors and Admirals cried,
When they saw him nearing the farther side,
"He has gone to fish for his Aunt Jobiska's
Runcible Cat with crimson whiskers!"

But before he touched the shore—
  The shore of the Bristol Channel,
A sea-green Porpoise carried away
  His wrapper of scarlet flannel.
And when he came to observe his feet,
Formerly garnished with toes so neat,
His face at once became forlorn
On perceiving that all his toes were gone!

And nobody ever knew,
  From that dark day to the present,
Whoso had taken the Pobble's toes,
  In a manner so far from pleasant.
Whether the shrimps or crawfish gray,
Or crafty mermaids stole them away,

Nobody knew; and nobody knows
How the Pobble was robbed of his twice five toes!

The Pobble who has no toes
  Was placed in a friendly Bark,
And they rowed him back and carried him up
  To his Aunt Jobiska's Park.
And she made him a feast at his earnest wish,
Of eggs and buttercups fried with fish;
And she said, "It's a fact the whole world knows,
That Pobbles are happier without their toes."

Edward Lear (1812-1888)

Thomas Hood, one of the best of English humorous poets, is now remembered chiefly for his serious poem, "The Bridge of Sighs." Like Shakespeare, Hood was too fond of that questionable form of humor, the pun; but if puns are at all allowable, Hood has the distinction of being the cleverest punster who ever wrote in verse. The following poem is a burlesque of sentimental and martial ballads as well as an excellent specimen of humorous verse.

FAITHLESS NELLY GRAY

A Pathetic Ballad

Ben Battle was a soldier bold,
  And used to war's alarms;
But a cannon-ball took off his legs,
  So he laid down his arms!

Now as they bore him off the field,
  Said he, "Let others shoot,

For here I leave my second leg,
And the Forty-second Foot!"

The army-surgeons made him limbs:
Said he, "They're only pegs:
But there's as wooden members quite
As represent my legs!"

Now Ben he loved a pretty maid,
Her name was Nelly Gray;
So he went to pay her his devours,
When he'd devoured his pay!

But when he called on Nelly Gray,
She made him quite a scoff;
And when she saw his wooden legs,
Began to take them off!

"Oh, Nelly Gray! Oh, Nelly Gray.
Is this your love so warm?
The love that loves a scarlet coat
Should be more uniform!"

Said she, "I loved a soldier once,
For he was blithe and brave;
But I will never have a man
With both legs in the grave!

"Before you had those timber toes,
Your love I did allow,
But then, you know, you stand upon
Another footing now!"

"Oh, Nelly Gray! Oh, Nelly Gray!
For all your jeering speeches,

At duty's call, I left my legs,
In Badajos's *breaches!*"

"Why then," said she, "you've lost the feet
Of legs in war's alarms,
And now you cannot wear your shoes
Upon your feats of arms!"

"Oh, false and fickle Nelly Gray!
I know why you refuse:—
Though I've no feet—some other man
Is standing in my shoes!

"I wish I ne'er had seen your face;
But, now, a long farewell!
For you will be my death;—alas!
You will not be my *Nell!*"

Now when he went from Nelly Gray,
His heart so heavy got—
And life was such a burthen grown,
It made him take a knot!

So round his melancholy neck,
A rope he did entwine,
And, for his second time in life,
Enlisted in the Line!

One end he tied around a beam,
And then removed his pegs,
And, as his legs were off,—of course,
He soon was off his legs!

And there he hung till he was dead
As any nail in town,—

For though distress had cut him up,
It could not cut him down!

A dozen men sat on his corpse,
To find out why he died—
And they buried Ben in four cross-roads,
With a *stake* in his inside!

Thomas Hood (1799-1845)

No discussion of shorter, lighter poems would be complete without an example of the limerick. The author of "The Young Lady of Niger" is unknown.

There was a young lady of Niger
Who smiled as she rode on a Tiger;
They came back from the ride
With the lady inside,
And the smile on the face of the Tiger.

The parody is an exceptionally interesting variety of light verse. The better kind of parody burlesques not merely the rhythm and diction but also the sense. Phœbe Cary's parody on Goldsmith's well-known song (see Chapter III) is better than most of her serious poems.

WHEN LOVELY WOMAN WANTS A FAVOR

When lovely woman wants a favor,
And finds, too late, that man won't bend,
What earthly circumstance can save her
From disappointment in the end?

The only way to bring him over,
The last experiment to try,

Whether a husband or a lover,
If he have a feeling is—to cry.

Phœbe Cary (1824-1871)

Bret Harte is probably the best of American parodists. His parody of Whittier's "Maud Muller" is not merely funny; it exposes effectively the false sentiment of that popular poem. Hence it is sound criticism.

MRS. JUDGE JENKINS

(*Being the Only Genuine Sequel to "Maud Muller"*)

Maud Muller all that summer day
Raked the meadow sweet with hay;

Yet, looking down the distant lane,
She hoped the Judge would come again.

But when he came, with smile and bow,
Maud only blushed, and stammered, "Ha-ow?"

And spoke of her "pa," and wondered whether
He'd give consent they should wed together.

Old Muller burst in tears, and then
Begged that the Judge would lend him "ten";

For trade was dull, and wages low,
And the "craps," this year, were somewhat slow.

And ere the languid summer died,
Sweet Maud became the Judge's bride.

But on the day that they were mated,
Maud's brother Bob was intoxicated;

And Maud's relations, twelve in all,
Were very drunk at the Judge's hall;

And when the summer came again,
The young bride bore him babies twain;

And the Judge was blest, but thought it strange
That bearing children made such a change;

For Maud grew broad and red and stout,
And the waist that his arm once clasped about

Was more than he now could span; and he
Sighed as he pondered, ruefully,

How that which in Maud was native grace
In Mrs. Jenkins was out of place;

And thought of the twins, and wished that they
Looked less like the men who raked the hay

On Muller's farm, and dreamed with pain
Of the day he wandered down the lane.

And looking down that dreary track,
He half regretted that he came back;

For, had he waited, he might have wed
Some maiden fair and thoroughbred;

For there be women fair as she,
Whose verbs and nouns do more agree.

Alas for maiden! alas for judge!
And the sentimental,—that's one-half "fudge";

For Maud soon thought the Judge a bore,
With all his learning and all his lore;

And the Judge would have bartered Maud's fair face
For more refinement and social grace.

If, of all words of tongue and pen,
The saddest are, "It might have been,"

More sad are these we daily see:
"It is, but hadn't ought to be."

Francis Bret Harte (1836-1902)

In most studies of poetry little attention is paid to poems shorter than the sonnet and the song. In an anthology, in which the editor is unable to include a tenth of what he would like to use, short poems are a veritable godsend; but they are so interesting and often so excellent that no apology is needed for their inclusion. "A little thing may be perfect," said Aldrich, "but perfection is not a little thing." Although by no means all the shorter poems which are here quoted belong to *vers de société*, they are all, at their best, characterized by ease, naturalness, finish, and to a greater degree than any other form of poetry, by an epigrammatic conciseness. The brief poem calls for an idea that can be briefly expressed. It would be fatal to expand into an ode one of the sonnets of Keats or to make a sonnet out of Russell Hilliard Loines's quatrain, "On a Magazine Sonnet":

"Scorn not the sonnet," though its strength be sapped,
Nor say malignant its inventor blundered;
The corpse that here in fourteen lines is wrapped
Had else been covered with a hundred.

The short poem often takes the form of an epigram, an epitaph, an inscription, or an autograph. As compared with the elegy, the epitaph is less an expression of grief than an attempt to sum up the merits or faults of its subject. The following poem, formerly ascribed to Ben Jonson, who wrote many excellent epitaphs, was written by William Browne, a minor poet of the seventeenth century. The Countess of Pembroke was a sister of Sir Philip Sidney; it was for her that Sidney wrote his romance, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia.*

Underneath this sable hearse
Lies the subject of all verse,
Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother:
Death, ere thou hast slain another
Fair and learn'd and good as she,
Time shall throw a dart at thee.

In many short poems the heroic couplet, which lends itself admirably to epigrammatic conciseness and point, is used to excellent effect. An example is the epitaph which Alexander Pope wrote for Sir Isaac Newton, the celebrated discoverer of the law of gravitation:

Nature and Nature's laws lay hid in night:
God said, *Let Newton be!* and all was light.

Tennyson used a different measure for another superb poem of the same type, "Sir John Franklin: On the Cenotaph in Westminster Abbey." Franklin was an Arctic explorer who died in the far North.

Not here! the white North has thy bones; and thou,
Heroic sailor-soul,

Art passing on thine happier voyage now
Toward no earthly pole.

Not inferior to any of the preceding poems is Edwin Arlington Robinson's version of a poem in the Greek Anthology, "An Inscription by the Sea":

No dust have I to cover me,
My grave no man may show;
My tomb is this unending sea,
And I lie far below.
My fate, O stranger, was to drown;
And where it was the ship went down
Is what the sea-birds know.

Epitaphs in lighter vein are very numerous. An eighteenth century poet, John Gay, wrote an epitaph for himself which some one actually inscribed upon his tomb:

Life is a jest, and all things show it:
I thought so once, and now I know it.

A famous epitaph by an otherwise forgotten poet is the Earl of Rochester's "Epitaph on Charles II." King Charles, who came to the throne in 1660, was easy-going, witty, and good-natured, but dissipated and unprincipled.

Here lies our Sovereign Lord the King,
Whose word no man relies on,
Who never said a foolish thing,
Nor ever did a wise one.

Some of the best of British epitaphs were written by Burns. Most of them are humorous, but "A Bard's Epitaph," already quoted, is one of the best of his serious

poems. The poem quoted below is his "Epitaph on John Dove," an innkeeper. *Ken* means know; *carl*, fellow; *maun*, must; *memento mori*, remember that all must die; *warl'*, world.

Here lies Johnny Pidgeon;
What was his religion?
  Wha e'er desires to ken,
To some other warl'
Maun follow the carl,
  For here Johnny Pidgeon had nane!

Strong ale was ablution,
Small beer persecution,
  A dram was *memento mori;*
But a full flowing bowl
Was the saving his soul,
  And port was celestial glory.

As every reader of Burns, Scott, and Stevenson will recall, some of the strangest and most romantic episodes in English poetry and fiction concern the attempts of the Jacobites, followers of James II and his descendants, to place one or another of the worthless Stuart family upon the British throne. In "A Jacobite's Epitaph," another Scotchman, Lord Macaulay, points out the real pathos of this devotion to a lost cause:

To my true king I offered free from stain
Courage and faith; vain faith, and courage vain.
For him I threw lands, honours, wealth away,
And one dear hope that was more prized than they.
For him I languished in a foreign clime,
Grey-haired with sorrow in my manhood's prime;

Heard on Lavernia Scargill's whispering trees,
And pined by Arno for my lovelier Tees;
Beheld each night my home in fevered sleep,
Each morning started from the dream to weep;
Till God, who saw me tried too sorely, gave
The resting-place I asked, an early grave.
O thou, whom chance leads to this nameless stone,
From that proud country which was once mine own,
By those white cliffs I never more must see,
By that dear language which I spake like thee,
Forget all feuds, and shed one English tear
O'er English dust. A broken heart lies here.

There are a number of beautiful short poems concerned with death which do not come under the head of epitaphs. One of the best of these is an Anglo-Saxon couplet supposed to have been inscribed upon the true cross on which Jesus was crucified. This poem, known as the "Brussels Cross Inscription," has been thus translated by Professor Chauncey B. Tinker:

Rood is my name. Once long ago I bore
Trembling, bedewed with blood, the mighty King.

A more famous short poem is the Roman Emperor Hadrian's address "To his Soul," which has been translated by Matthew Prior:

Poor little, pretty, fluttering thing,
Must we no longer live together?
And dost thou prune thy trembling wing,
To take thy flight thou know'st not whither?

Thy humorous vein, thy pleasing folly
Lie all neglected, all forgot:

And pensive, wavering, melancholy,
Thou dread'st and hop'st thou know'st not what.

The following lines by Emily Dickinson recall Gray's famous "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard":

This quiet Dust was Gentlemen and Ladies,
And Lads and Girls;
Was laughter and ability and sighing,
And frocks and curls.
This passive place a Summer's nimble mansion,
Where Bloom and Bees
Fulfilled their Oriental Circuit,
Then ceased like these.*

Two of the most beautiful of all brief poems are Goethe's "Wanderer's Night-songs," which Longfellow has skilfully translated:

I

Thou that from the heavens art,
Every pain and sorrow stillest,
And the doubly wretched heart
Doubly with refreshment fillest,
I am weary with contending!
Why this rapture and unrest?
Peace descending
Come, ah, come into my breast!

II

O'er all the hill-tops
Is quiet now,
In all the tree-tops
Hearest thou

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Hardly a breath;
The birds are asleep in the trees:
Wait; soon like these
Thou too shalt rest.

Walter Savage Landor has more great short poems to his credit than any other English poet. The best known of these, after "Rose Aylmer," is "On his Seventy-fifth Birthday":

I strove with none, for none was worth my strife;
Nature I loved, and, next to Nature, Art;
I warm'd both hands before the fire of life;
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

Hardly inferior to this is his quatrain, "On Death":

Death stands above me, whispering low
I know not what into my ear:
Of his strange language all I know
Is, there is not a word of fear.

In a lighter vein is Landor's "With Petrarch's Sonnets":

Behold what homage to his idol paid
The tuneful suppliant of Valclusa's shade.
His verses still the tender heart engage,
They charm'd a rude, and please a polish'd age:
Some are to nature and to passion true,
And all had been so, had he lived for you.

Using the same metrical form, Matthew Prior pays a lady a similar compliment in his lines "Written in a Lady's Milton":

With virtue such as yours had Eve been arm'd,
In vain the fruit had blush'd, the serpent charm'd.
Nor had our bliss by penitence been bought,
Nor had frail Adam fall'n, nor Milton wrote.

"Her Initials," by Thomas Hardy, tells a different story.

Upon a poet's page I wrote
Of old two letters of her name;
Part seemed she of the effulgent thought
Whence that high singer's rapture came.
—When now I turn the leaf the same
Immortal light illumes the lay,
But from the letters of her name
The radiance has waned away!

The eighteenth century was fond of such witty, cynical epigrams as the following couplet which Pope caused to be engraved on the collar of a dog which he presented to the Prince of Wales:

I am His Highness' dog at Kew;
Pray, tell me, sir, whose dog are you?

Much more modern in sentiment is William Watson's epitaph for a dog:

His friends he loved. His direst earthly foes—
  Cats—I believe he did but feign to hate.
My hand will miss the insinuated nose,
  Mine eyes the tail that wagg'd contempt at fate.

Let us return for a moment to the eighteenth century, which has given us so many epigrams. Mrs. Jane Brereton wrote the clever quatrain, "On Beau Nash's Picture, which

once Stood between the Busts of Newton and Pope." Beau Nash was a famous dandy and social leader at Bath.

This picture placed these busts between,
  Gives satire its full strength;
Wisdom and wit are seldom seen,
  But folly at full length.

The above lines suggested the following quatrain by the Earl of Chesterfield:

Immortal Newton never spoke
  More truth than here you'll find;
Nor Pope himself e'er penn'd a joke
  Severer on mankind.

One of the best of American quatrains is "Woman's Will" by John Godfrey Saxe:

Men, dying, make their wills; but wives
  Escape a work so sad;
Why should they make what all their lives
  The gentle dames have had?

A contemporary American poet, Willard Wattles, has written a clever quatrain entitled "Creeds": *

How pitiful are little folk—
  They seem so very small;
They look at stars, and think they are
  Denominational.

Leigh Hunt, the friend of Keats, is best remembered for his "Rondeau," which is technically not a rondeau at all. The Jenny of the poem was Mrs. Thomas Carlyle.

* By permission from *Lanterns in Gethsemane* by Willard Wattles, copyright by E. P. Dutton and Company.

Jenny kissed me when we met,
Jumping from the chair she sat in;
Time, you thief, who love to get
Sweets into your list, put that in!
Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,
Say that health and wealth have missed me,
Say I'm growing old, but add
Jenny kissed me.

"To a Post-Office Inkwell," by Christopher Morley, who edits for the New York *Evening Post* a "colyum" called "The Bowling Green," is one of the best of latter-day short poems:

How many humble hearts have dipped
In you, and scrawled their manuscript!
How shared their secrets, told their cares,
Their curious and quaint affairs!
Your pool of ink, your scratchy pen,
Have moved the lives of unborn men,
And watched young people, breathing hard,
Put Heaven on a postal card.

Autograph poems are numerous but usually poor in quality. Not quite sincere, perhaps, but certainly impressive are Byron's "Lines Written in an Album at Malta":

As o'er the cold sepulchral stone
Some name arrests the passer-by;
Thus, when thou view'st this page alone,
May mine attract thy pensive eye!

And when by thee that name is read,
Perchance in some succeeding year,

Reflect on me as on the dead,
And think my heart is buried here.

Although Lowell's "For an Autograph" is too much of a sermon, it is otherwise excellent:

Though old the thought and oft exprest,
'Tis his at last who says it best,—
I'll try my fortune with the rest.

Life is a leaf of paper white
Whereon each one of us may write
His word or two, and then comes night.

"Lo, time and space enough," we cry,
"To write an epic!" so we try
Our nibs upon the edge, and die.

Muse not which way the pen to hold,
Luck hates the slow and loves the bold,
Soon come the darkness and the cold.

Greatly begin! though thou have time
But for a line, be that sublime,—
Not failure, but low aim, is crime.

Ah, with what lofty hope we came!
But we forget it, dream of fame,
And scrawl, as I do here, a name.

For the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument in Boston Lowell wrote the following quatrain:

To those who died for her on land and sea,
That she might have a country great and free,
Boston builds this: build ye her monument
In lives like theirs, at duty's summons spent.

Perhaps Richard Watson Gilder had the above poem in mind when he wrote the following quatrain for Lowell's birthday:

> Navies nor armies can exalt the state,—
> Millions of men, nor coined wealth untold:
> Down to the pit may sink a land of gold;
> But one great name can make a country great.

William Watson has more good epigrams to his credit than any other living poet. His "To Christina Rossetti" is a beautiful tribute to one of the greatest women who have written poetry; for Christina Rossetti was a genuine poet, not a poetaster or a mere "poetess." The two other women referred to in the poem are probably Sappho and Mrs. Browning.

> Songstress, in all times ended and begun,
> Thy billowy-bosom'd fellows are not three.
> Of those sweet peers, the grass is green o'er one;
> And blue above the other is the sea.

Brief poems in free verse are rare, for free verse appears so easy to write that it tempts the poet into diffuseness. Nevertheless there are some short poems in free verse which attain high excellence. Whitman's "To Old Age" is one of the best:

> I see in you the estuary that enlarges and spreads
> itself grandly as its pours in the great sea.

Ezra Pound's "In a Station of the Metro," or London subway, gives a striking picture:

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
Petals on a wet, black bough.

A contemporary American poet, Adelaide Crapsey, has written many "cinquains," free verse poems in five lines.

TRIAD

These be
Three silent things:
The falling snow . . . the hour
Before the dawn . . . the mouth of one
Just dead.

THE WARNING

Just now,
Out of the strange
Still dusk . . . as strange, as still . . .
A white moth flew. Why am I grown
So cold?

These two poems remind one of the short Japanese form called the *hokku*, a poem of only three lines, in which the poet endeavors to condense his thought into the smallest possible space. The great and growing influence of Asiatic poetry on contemporary verse has tended to bring about greater conciseness and finish. Amy Lowell and Witter Bynner have recently translated a large number of Chinese poems for American readers.

In taking leave of light verse, we can do no better than quote Austin Dobson's plea for this rare and difficult type of poetry. Dobson, until his death in 1921, was the

greatest living master of *vers de société* and kindred forms. The following poem is very exceptional in that it employs only feminine rimes.

JOCOSA LYRA

In our hearts is the Great One of Avon
Engraven,
And we climb the cold summits once built on
By Milton.

But at times not the air that is rarest
Is fairest,
And we long in the valley to follow
Apollo.

Then we drop from the heights atmospheric
To Herrick,
Or we pour the Greek honey, grown blander,
Of Landor;

Or our cosiest nook in the shade is
Where Praed is,
Or we toss the light bells of the mocker
With Locker.

Oh, the song where not one of the Graces
Tight-laces,—
Where we woo the sweet Muses not starchly,
But archly,—

Where the verse, like a piper a-Maying,
Comes playing,—
And the rhyme is as gay as a dancer
In answer,—

It will last till men weary of pleasure
In measure!
It will last till men weary of laughter . . .
And after!

Austin Dobson (1840-1921)

CHAPTER X

FREE VERSE

The conceits of the poets of other lands I'd bring thee not,
Nor the compliments that have served their turn so long,
Nor rime, nor the classics, nor perfume of foreign court or indoor library.

Walt Whitman: "Thou Mother with thy Equal Brood"

Rime, as we have seen, is not essential to poetry; for if it were, we should be forced to the absurd conclusion that *Hamlet* and *Paradise Lost* are not poetry. Writers of free verse have forced us to abandon meter, the traditional mark of distinction between poetry and prose. Rhythm, every one admits, is essential; but literary prose has also a rhythm of its own which it is difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish from that of poetry. A brilliant contemporary critic, J. E. Spingarn, actually goes so far as to say, "The fact is that there is no real distinction between prose and verse."

Certain older poets and critics long ago conceded the fundamental principle of free verse when they admitted that meter is not an essential of poetry. Aristotle, writing over two thousand years ago, said that poetry is to be distinguished from prose by something other than meter. The history of Herodotus, he said, would remain history if it were written in verse. Sidney, Wordsworth,

Coleridge, Shelley, and Emerson all admitted that meter is not essential, although none of them attempted free verse, as logically they should have done. Poetic prose, or prose poetry, however, many older authors did write. In this anomalous form Sidney, Sir Thomas Browne, Milton, DeQuincey, Lamb, Poe, and Emerson, to name no others, all endeavored, like present-day writers of free verse, to explore the uncertain borderland which separates verse from prose. The prose poems of Ossian, which enjoyed a tremendous vogue all over Europe in the late eighteenth century, are perhaps the most famous of the early specimens of free verse.

Ever since the divorce of poetry from music, there has been an increasing tendency to irregularity in poetic form. Many older poems are to be distinguished from free verse only by the use of rime. Dryden's "Alexander's Feast," Coleridge's "Kubla Khan," Arnold's "Dover Beach," and Tennyson's "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington" have neither regular stanzaic form, length of line, nor uniform metrical movement. Dryden, in his irregular ode, mixes trochaic, iambic, and anapestic feet almost as freely as Walt Whitman and Carl Sandburg do. Moreover, in poems which purport to be regular, we find wide variations from the normal form. Browning's line,

Historical and philosophical,

is meant for blank verse; but so also is Milton's

Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death.

Both these lines are meant to be read as iambic pentameter! Anapestic and dactylic poems, as we have seen,

are almost invariably irregular. Their popularity throughout the nineteenth century is significant.

Long before the time of Whitman, English poets experimented with unrimed forms apart from blank verse. Orthodox poets like Scott, Tennyson, Longfellow, and Lowell imitated Anglo-Saxon and Icelandic poetry, which employed alliteration instead of rime and required no fixed number of syllables in each line. In fact, as one reads Tennyson's translation of the Old English "Battle of Brunanburh," free verse seems almost a reversion to the earliest known form of English poetry. In "Merlin and the Gleam," Tennyson, without stressing alliteration, imitated this Anglo-Saxon unrimed form.

Launch your vessel,
And crowd your canvas,
And, ere it vanishes
Over the margin,
After it, follow it,
Follow the Gleam.

Aside from blank verse and free verse, probably the best unrimed poem in the language is William Collins's "Ode to Evening." The stanza which Collins employs consists of two iambic pentameter lines followed by two of iambic trimeter.

ODE TO EVENING

If aught of oaten stop or pastoral song
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear
    Like thy own solemn springs,
    Thy springs, and dying gales;

O Nymph reserved,—while now the bright-haired sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed:

Now air is hushed, save where the weak-eyed bat,
With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing;
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum:
Now teach me, Maid composed
To breathe some softened strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy darkening vale,
May, not unseemly, with its stillness suit,
As musing slow, I hail
Thy genial loved return.

For when thy folding star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp
The fragrant Hours, and Elves
Who slept in buds the day,

And many a Nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge,
And sheds the freshening dew, and, lovelier still,
The pensive Pleasures sweet
Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene;
Or find some ruin, midst its dreary dells,
Whose walls more awful nod
By thy religious gleams.

Or if chill blustering winds, or driving rain
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut

That from the mountain's side
Views wilds, and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discovered spires;
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

While Spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve!
While Summer loves to sport
Beneath thy lingering light;

While sallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves;
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
Affrights thy shrinking train,
And rudely rends thy robes;

So long, regardful of thy quiet rule,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, smiling Peace,
Thy gentlest influence own,
And love thy favorite name.

William Collins (*1721-1759*)

If we go to other literatures than English, we find that both rime and meter are often unknown. Rime is not found in classical Latin, Greek, or Hebrew, and very rarely in English poetry until after the Norman Conquest in 1066. Hebrew poetry has nothing, either in the original or in translation, which corresponds to English meter or rime. Yet who that disputes the claims of free verse will deny that the following lines from the Nineteenth Psalm are poetry?

The heavens declare the glory of God;
And the firmament sheweth his handywork.
Day unto day uttereth speech,
And night unto night sheweth knowledge.
There is no speech nor language;
Their voice cannot be heard.
Their line is gone out through all the earth,
And their words to the end of the world.

Ever since the time of Elizabeth, there have been attempts in English to write poetry in classical meters, in order to avoid rime and the iambic movement. The hexameter used by Longfellow in *Evangeline* is the one classical form which has won a real foothold—and since in Latin and Greek verse quantity and not accent is the guiding principle, Longfellow's hexameters are very different from those of Homer and Vergil. Upon the modern reader, who, like Shakespeare, usually has "small Latin and less Greek," the effect is practically the same as that of free verse. The sapphic stanza, named for the Greek poet Sappho, has tempted a considerable number of English and American poets. Sara Teasdale (Mrs. Filsinger), one of the best of contemporary lyric poets and an ardent admirer of Sappho, has written the following striking lyric in the sapphic stanza.

THE LAMP

If I can bear your love like a lamp before me,
When I go down the long steep Road of Darkness,
I shall not fear the everlasting shadows,
Nor cry in terror.

If I can find out God, then I shall find Him;
If none can find Him, then I shall sleep soundly,
Knowing how well on earth your love sufficed me,
A lamp in darkness.

Sara Teasdale (1884-)

Not long before Whitman published his *Leaves of Grass* in 1855, Matthew Arnold began to write unrimed poems which approximate free verse. "The Youth of Nature," "The Future," "The Strayed Reveller," and "Rugby Chapel" are much nearer to free verse than we should have expected from any Victorian poet. Arnold may have found a precedent in Southey's *Thalaba*, Shelley's *Queen Mab*, or even in the choruses of Milton's *Samson Agonistes;* all these are distinguished from free verse only by a prevailing iambic movement. After Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale," Arnold's "Philomela" is the best poem upon the favorite bird of the English poets.

PHILOMELA

Hark! ah, the nightingale—
The tawny-throated!
Hark, from that moonlit cedar what a burst!
What triumph! hark!—what pain!

O wanderer from a Grecian shore,
Still, after many years, in distant lands,
Still nourishing in thy bewilder'd brain
That wild, unquench'd, deep-sunken, old-world pain—
Say, will it never heal?
And can this fragrant lawn
With its cool trees, and night,

And the sweet, tranquil Thames,
And moonshine, and the dew,
To thy rack'd heart and brain
Afford no balm?

Dost thou to-night behold,
Here, through the moonlight on this English grass,
The unfriendly palace in the Thracian wild?
Dost thou again peruse
With hot cheeks and sear'd eyes
The too clear web, and thy dumb sister's shame?
Dost thou once more assay
Thy flight, and feel come over thee,
Poor fugitive, the feathery change
Once more, and once more seem to make resound
With love and hate, triumph and agony,
Lone Daulis, and the high Cephissian vale?
Listen, Eugenia—
How thick the bursts come crowding through the leaves!
Again—thou hearest?
Eternal passion!
Eternal pain!

Matthew Arnold (1822-1888)

Modern free verse, or *vers libre*, as it is often unnecessarily named, goes back chiefly to Walt Whitman. Yet the English poet William Blake wrote free verse before Whitman was born. Blake came to the conclusion that meter was as much of a bondage as rime. "I therefore," he says, "produced a variety in every line, both of cadences and number of syllables. Every word and every letter is studied and put into its fit place: the terrific numbers are reserved for the terrific parts, and the prosaic for inferior parts: all are necessary to each other.

Poetry Fetter'd Fetters the Human Race!" One can hardly find a better definition of free verse even today. Blake's poetry, however, attracted practically no attention until half a century after his death; and he has received little credit as an innovator. It was Whitman who fought and won the battle for free verse.

As we have shown, there were many poems which approximated modern free verse before Whitman published his *Leaves of Grass* in 1855. Whitman's only metrical innovation consisted in discarding at once both meter and rime; each of these had been separately abandoned by older poets. It is difficult nowadays to understand the uproar raised by *Leaves of Grass* until we discover that it was really the strangeness of Whitman's language and subject matter that called down upon "the good gray poet" the wrath of our fathers. Present-day readers likewise frequently condemn contemporary free verse solely because they dislike the poet's language and opinions.

Every great poet first disturbs and ultimately enlarges our conception of poetry; and hence almost every great poet finds critics who deny that he is a poet at all. The literary taste of the average reader, founded upon older authors like Keats and Tennyson, is usually at least half a century behind that of living writers. When the average person comes across a poem by Carl Sandburg or Edgar Lee Masters, he is shocked by something to which he is unaccustomed; and he illogically calls it bad art. Norwegian critics maintained that Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* was not poetry because it violated all established rules. Ibsen replied: "My book *is* poetry. . . . The Norwegian conception of what poetry is, shall be made to fit

my book." So Whitman said of his *Leaves of Grass;* and today few or no literary critics deny that both Ibsen and Whitman were genuine poets. Nothing is more foolish than to condemn an author for not conforming to rules. As Sidney Lanier once wrote, "For the artist in verse there is no law; the perception and love of beauty constitute the whole outfit."

Much of the objection to free verse is due solely to its unconventional appearance on the printed page. The free verse poet divides his sentences so that the pauses shall come at the ends of the lines; in other words, he prints his poem as it is to be read. When an unrimed poem is read aloud, the average person is unable to distinguish free verse from blank verse or even from rhythmic prose. One of the four following selections is in free verse, another in blank verse, a third in prose, and a fourth in rime. Can you tell at a glance which is which?

She lay stone-still
In a trance of terror and mournfulness,
Mechanically counting the tears as they fell,
One by one.

The white mist,
Like a face-cloth to the face,
Clung to the dead earth,
And the land was still.

The New World shook him off;
The Old yet groans beneath what he and his prepared,
If not completed:
He leaves heirs on many thrones to all his vices,
Without what begot compassion for him—
His tame virtues.

In youth my wings were strong and tireless,
But I did not know the mountains.
In age I knew the mountains
But my weary wings could not follow my vision—
Genius is wisdom and youth.

The first passage is in prose, and is taken from Meredith's *Ordeal of Richard Feverel.* The second is in blank verse, from Tennyson's "Guinevere." The third is part of a rimed stanza in Byron's "Vision of Judgment." Only the fourth selection is free verse; it is a complete poem entitled "Alexander Throckmorton" from Edgar Lee Masters's *Spoon River Anthology.* All four passages are poetic and rhythmical, but only the second and third are metrical.

One of the most poetic writers of today is the Irish dramatist, Lord Dunsany. Although written in prose, his plays are full of poetry. His *Fifty-one Tales*, from which the following selection is taken, come much nearer being great poetry than most contemporary free verse. Dunsany's style, which seems to have been modeled upon Homer and the Bible, is characterized by a chaste beauty and a rigid economy. The line which he quotes from the *Iliad* is one of the most admired lines in Homer. It may be translated: "He went silently along the shore of the loud-sounding sea."

THE WORM AND THE ANGEL *

As he crawled from the tombs of the fallen a worm met with an angel.

And together they looked upon the kings and kingdoms,

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and youths and maidens and the cities of men. They saw the old men heavy in their chairs and heard the children singing in the fields. They saw far wars and warriors and walled towns, wisdom and wickedness, and the pomp of kings, and the people of all the lands that the sunlight knew.

And the worm spake to the angel saying: "Behold my food."

"*βῆ δ' ἀκέων παρὰ θῖνα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης,*"

murmured the angel, for they walked by the sea, "and can you destroy that too?"

And the worm paled in his anger to a greyness ill to behold, for for three thousand years he had tried to destroy that line and still its melody was ringing in his head.

Lord Dunsany (1878-)

Walt Whitman is preëminently the poet of American democracy. While Longfellow and Holmes were wooing the courtly muses of Europe, Whitman turned his back upon the traditional subject matter, metrical forms, and language of poetry in an endeavor to translate into poetry American life and American ideals. There is little that is distinctively national about the work of Poe and the New England poets, excellent as their poems often are. "Too many of your American writers are echoes," says the Hindu poet Tagore; "but Whitman is a voice." Before America could be adequately put into poetry, so it seemed to Whitman, poetry itself had to be democratized. Rime and meter had to go. The "divine average," not Shakespeare's kings, Tennyson's knights, or Homer's chieftains, were to supply the heroes of American poetry. Poems were to be written, not for a few cultured aristocrats, but for the whole people.

The strangest fact about Whitman's work is that though it was intended for the masses, the average man in the street has remained wholly indifferent to it. In Whitman's time the prevailing American notion of poetry was represented not by *Leaves of Grass* but by "The Village Blacksmith" and *Evangeline.* During his lifetime Whitman's chief admirers were cultured Englishmen. Curiously enough, it was Whitman's vogue abroad, which is still enormous and increasing, that forced Americans to recognize him. Although Emerson and Thoreau both hailed him as a genuine poet, it is to Englishmen like Rossetti and Swinburne that we go for characteristic praise. The finest tribute ever paid to Whitman is Swinburne's "To Walt Whitman in America," from which we quote the following stanzas:

> Send but a song oversea for us,
> Heart of their hearts who are free,
> Heart of their singer, to be for us
> More than our singing can be;
> Ours in the tempest at error,
> With no light but the twilight of terror;
> Send us a song oversea! . . .
>
> Make us, too, music, to be with us
> As a word from a world's heart warm,
> To sail the dark as a sea with us,
> Full-sailed, outsinging the storm,
> A song to put fire in our ears
> Whose burning shall burn up tears,
> Whose sign bid battle reform.

Since Whitman's verse is singularly uneven, it is best for the beginner to read him first in selected poems.

When trying to illustrate his theory that all things are poetical, Whitman often wrote wretched stuff which sounds like a telephone directory or *Who's Who in America*; but when he wrote spontaneously of what he knew and felt, he produced great and original poetry. His later poems are much less uneven in merit than his earlier verse.

Whitman's poetry was not meant for those who wish merely to while away an idle hour. He might have said of his poems, as Browning said of his, that he never meant them to take the place of an after-dinner cigar.

TO A CERTAIN CIVILIAN

Did you ask dulcet rhymes from me?
Did you seek the civilian's peaceful and languishing rhymes?
Did you find what I sang erewhile so hard to follow,
Why, I was not singing erewhile for you to follow, to understand—nor am I now
(I have been born of the same as the war was born,
The drum-corps' rattle is ever to me sweet music, I love well the martial dirge,
With slow wail and convulsive throb leading the officer's funeral);
What to such as you anyhow such a poet as I? therefore leave my works,
And go lull yourself with what you can understand, and with piano-tunes,
For I lull nobody, and you will never understand me.

Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

There are those who maintain that Whitman's compositions are not finished poems but merely the raw material untranslated into poetry. Of some of his poems and of

parts of others, this is undeniably true. In the following poem the opening lines seem prosaic, but they prepare us for the conclusion, which is genuine poetry. One who looks at the stars from the point of view of the mathematician will see very little poetry in them, for science and poetry hold opposite attitudes toward the facts of life. The poetic attitude is found in the Nineteenth Psalm or in the poem which we quote from Whitman.

WHEN I HEARD THE LEARN'D ASTRONOMER

When I heard the learn'd astronomer,
When the proofs, the figures, were ranged in columns before me,
When I was shown the charts and diagrams, to add, divide, and measure them,
When I sitting heard the astronomer where he lectured with much applause in the lecture-room,
How soon unaccountable I became tired and sick,
Till rising and gliding out I wander'd off by myself,
In the mystical moist night-air, and from time to time,
Look'd up in perfect silence at the stars.

Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

The Civil War marks the great crisis in Whitman's life. Though it tried his faith in American democracy as nothing else ever did, he came out with his faith confirmed. His *Drum-Taps* is the best volume of poems inspired by the War. His war poems describe not the great battles but minor incidents which bring out the human qualities of the participants in that tremendous conflict. What more could any soldier say of a faithful comrade-in-arms than Whitman says of an unknown soldier killed in Virginia?

AS TOILSOME I WANDER'D VIRGINIA'S WOODS

As toilsome I wander'd Virginia's woods,
To the music of rustling leaves kick'd by my feet (for 't was autumn),
I mark'd at the foot of a tree the grave of a soldier;
Mortally wounded he and buried on the retreat (easily all could I understand),
The halt of a mid-day hour, when up! no time to lose—yet this sign left,
On a tablet scrawl'd and nail'd on the tree by the grave,
Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade.

Long, long I muse, then on my way go wandering,
Many a changeful season to follow, and many a scene of life,
Yet at times through changeful season and scene, abrupt, alone, or in the crowded street,
Comes before me the unknown soldier's grave, comes the inscription rude in Virginia's woods,
Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade.

Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

At his best Whitman does not suffer from comparison with poets who use only the regular metrical forms. With other poems expressing a poet's attitude toward death—Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar," Browning's "Prospice," and Sara Teasdale's "The Lamp"—one should compare Whitman's "Darest Thou Now, O Soul" and other poems in free verse to be quoted later in the chapter. In earlier years Whitman had written:

Has any one supposed it lucky to be born?
I hasten to inform him or her it is just as lucky to die, and I know it.

All goes onward and outward, nothing collapses,
And to die is different from what any one supposed, and luckier.

Whitman's youthful optimism we may attribute to his extraordinary physical vitality; but the optimism of the chronic invalid that he became after the Civil War is not easy to explain.

DAREST THOU NOW, O SOUL

Darest thou now, O soul,
Walk out with me toward the unknown region,
Where neither ground is for the feet nor any path to follow?

No map there, nor guide,
Nor voice sounding, nor touch of human hand,
Nor face with blooming flesh, nor lips, nor eyes, are in that land.

I know it not, O Soul,
Nor dost thou, all is a blank before us,
All waits undream'd of in that region, that inaccessible land.

Till when the ties loosen,
All but the ties eternal, Time and Space,
Nor darkness, gravitation, sense, nor any bounds bounding us.

Then we burst forth, we float,
In Time and Space, O soul, prepared for them,
Equal, equipt at last (O joy! O Fruit of all!) them to fulfil, O soul.

Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

The leading contemporary poets use free verse much less than is generally supposed. Three of the best known

American poets, Robinson, Frost, and Lindsay, rarely or never use it. Sandburg and Masters use free verse a great deal, but only Sandburg, of our major contemporary poets, seems to use it to the exclusion of regular forms. Among latter-day English poets only Wilfrid Wilson Gibson and the late William Ernest Henley have used free verse to any great extent. Henley's free verse resembles Arnold's rather than Whitman's; in fact, its rhythm is almost invariably iambic.

MARGARITAE SORORI

A late lark twitters from the quiet skies:
And from the west,
Where the sun, his day's work ended,
Lingers as in content,
There falls on the old, gray city
An influence luminous and serene,
A shining peace.

The smoke ascends
In a rosy-and-golden haze. The spires
Shine and are changed. The lark sings on. The sun,
Closing his benediction,
Sinks, and the darkening air
Thrills with a sense of the triumphing night—
Night with her train of stars
And her great gift of sleep.

So be my passing!
My task accomplish'd and the long day done,
My wages taken, and in my heart
Some late lark singing,

Let me be gather'd to the quiet west,
The sundown splendid and serene,
Death.

William Ernest Henley (1849-1903)

The free verse of Masters and Sandburg resembles that of Whitman, whereas the free verse of Amy Lowell and "H.D." (Mrs. Richard Aldington) resembles rather the French *vers libre* poets who imitated Whitman. Thus, whether direct or indirect, Whitman's influence upon contemporary writers of free verse is very great. In style and subject matter he has influenced nearly all contemporary American poets. It was he who taught them to write upon American themes in unconventional language. He taught them not only how to handle free verse but also how to paint the poetic aspects of our modern urban and industrial life. In *The New World* a living American poet, Witter Bynner, has written the following tribute to Whitman:

Somebody called Walt Whitman
Dead!
He is alive instead,
Alive as I am. When I lift my head,
His head is lifted. When his brave mouth speaks,
My lips contain his word. And when his rocker creaks
Ghostly in Camden, there I sit in it and watch my hand grow old
And take upon my constant lips the kiss of younger truth . . .
It is my joy to tell and to be told
That he in all the world and me,
Cannot be dead,
That I, in all the world and him, youth after youth
Shall lift my head.

If the reader has mistaken the above passage for free verse, let him re-read it and note the rime scheme.

An excellent recent poem in free verse of the Whitman type is "Come, Republic," by Edgar Lee Masters, of whom we shall have more to say in the chapter on the Contemporary Poets. The poem was published in 1916, before America entered the World War. For "the A. D. Bloods," see the *Spoon River Anthology*.

COME, REPUBLIC

Come! United States of America,
And you one hundred million souls, O Republic,
Throw out your chests, lift up your heads,
And walk with a soldier's stride.
Quit burning up for money alone.
Quit slouching and dawdling,
And dreaming and moralising.
Quit idling about the streets, like the boy
In the village, who pines for the city.
Root out the sinister secret societies,
And the clans that stick together for office,
And the good men who care nothing for liberty,
But would run you, O Republic, as a household is run.
It is time, Republic, to get some class,
It is time to harden your muscles,
And to clear your eyes in the cold water of Reality,
And to tighten your nerves.
It is time to think what Nature means,
And to consult Nature,
When your soul, as you call it, calls to you
To follow principle!
It is time to snuff out the A. D. Bloods.
It is time to lift yourself, O Republic,
From the street corners of Spoon River.

Do you wish to survive,
And to count in the years to come?
Then do what the plow-boys did in sixty-one,
Who left the fields for the camp,
And tightened their nerves and hardened their arms
Till the day they left the camp for the fields
The bravest, readiest, clearest-eyed
Straight-walking men in the world,
And symbolical of a Republic
That is worthy the name!

If you, Republic, had kept the faith
Of a culture all your own,
And a spiritual independence,
And a freedom large and new.
If you had not set up a Federal judge in China,
And scrambled for place in the Orient,
And stolen the Philippine Islands,
And mixed in the business of Europe,
Three thousand miles of water east,
And seven thousand west
Had kept your hands untainted, free
For a culture all your own!
But while you were fumbling, and while you were dreaming
As the boy in the village dreams of the city
You were doing something worse:
You were imitating!
You came to the city and aped the swells,
And tried to enter their set!
You strained your Fate to their fate,
And borrowed the mood to live their life!
And here you are in the game, Republic,
But not prepared to play!

But you did it.
And the water east and water west

Are no longer your safeguard:
They are now your danger and difficulty!
And you must live the life you started to imitate
In spite of these perilous waters.
For they keep you now from being neutral—
For you are not neutral, Republic,
You only pretend to be.
You are not free, independent, brave,
You are shackled, cowardly
For what could happen to you overnight
In the Orient,
If you stood with your shoulders up,
And were Neutral!

Suppose you do it, Republic.
Get some class,
Throw out your chest, lift up your head,
Be a ruler in the world,
And not a hermit in regimentals with a flint-lock.
Colossus with one foot in Europe,
And one in China,
Quit looking between your legs for the re-appearance
Of the star of Bethlehem—
Stand up and be a man!

Edgar Lee Masters (*1869-*)

Carl Sandburg's best known poem, "Chicago," is quoted in the following chapter. The poem which we quote here is a cutting satire upon a certain type of American millionaire.

A FENCE

Now the stone house on the lake front is finished and the workmen are beginning the fence.
The palings are made of iron bars with steel points that can stab the life out of any man who falls on them.

As a fence, it is a masterpiece, and will shut off the rabble
and all vagabonds and hungry men and all wandering
children looking for a place to play.
Passing through the bars and over the steel points will go
nothing except Death and the Rain and To-morrow.

Carl Sandburg (1878-)

On the part of the best contemporary writers of free verse, there is a tendency toward a greater regularity of form. It is felt that free verse is too easy to write and that its facility betrays the poet into diffuseness and feebleness. Hence the attempt to define free verse and to lay down certain laws for its composition. The Imagists define free verse as "a verse-form based upon cadence." One of the rules for the writing of poetry laid down by the Imagists is, in part: "To create new rhythms —as the expressions of new moods—and not to copy old rhythms, which merely echo old moods. . . . In poetry, a new cadence means a new idea." The Imagists insist that the unit is not the foot or the line but the strophe, which may comprise the whole poem or only a part of it. Each strophe is conceived as a circle, a departure and a return. The following poem by John Gould Fletcher shows this tendency toward greater regularity of form.

EXIT

Thus would I have it:
So should it be for me,
The scene of my departure.
Cliffs ringed with scarlet,
And the sea pounding

The pale brown sand
Miles after miles;
And then, afar off,
White on the horizon,
One ship with sails full-set
Passing slowly and serenely,
Like a proud burst of music,
To fortunate islands.

John Gould Fletcher (1886-)

Free verse is a hybrid form; it is the result of an attempt to explore the no man's land which divides prose from verse. Of late years there has been much confusion of the arts. Music, poetry, and painting have all overstepped their traditional boundaries. Some of the later poets, not satisfied with free verse, have borrowed from the French a form called "polyphonic prose." This form, however, differs even less than free verse from what used to be called prose poetry or poetic prose. Mr. Patterson, in his excellent study, *The Rhythm of Prose*, states his conviction that the rhythm of free verse is not that of poetry but of prose—"spaced prose," he calls it. In other words, free verse is, in the main, only a new name for a very old thing, poetic or impassioned prose.

The bulk of current free verse is, like the great majority of rimed poems printed in our newspapers and magazines, not poetry at all; it is not even good prose. There are, however, poems in free verse which challenge comparison with anything that has been said or sung in rime. This anomalous form seems especially effective in poems which attempt to describe the complex industrial civilization of our time. Skyscrapers, railroads, and cot-

ton mills do not lend themselves readily to conventional poetic treatment. Theoretically, free verse permits the writer to use all the resources of both prose and poetry in his effort to say what has never been effectively said before. Free verse is least suited to lyric poetry; it is nearer the prose level and farther from the song than any other type of poetry. It is, however, excellent in realistic narrative and descriptive poetry.

CHAPTER XI

POEMS STUDIED BY THEME

Cynics have said since the first outpourings of men's hearts, "There is nothing new in art; there are no new subjects." But the very reverse is true. There are no old subjects; every subject is new as soon as it has been transformed by the imagination of the poet.—*Joel Elias Spingarn: "Creative Criticism"*

Up to this point we have studied poems either according to metrical form, as in the sonnet, or according to type, as in the song. There are, of course, many other ways of studying poetry, and each of them has its special merits. The method employed in this chapter, though seldom used, has decided advantages. A very illuminating comparison can be made of what poets in various countries and epochs have found to say of such perennially interesting subjects as nature, patriotism, love, war, death, and immortality. The comparative test is also an excellent test to apply to the work of a poet whose rank we wish to determine. After reading the poems contained in this chapter, the reader should decide whether, in his estimation, the American poets come up to the level of the British, and whether the present-day poets of either country measure up to older writers like Wordsworth and Poe. We shall consider four widely dif-

fering general themes: Death, Abraham Lincoln, Nature, and the City.

"Our sweetest songs," wrote Shelley, "are those that tell of saddest thought." Melancholy, said Poe, is "the most legitimate of all the poetical tones." Death seemed to Poe most poetical when it "most closely allies itself to *Beauty;* the death, then," reasoned Poe, "of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world; and equally is it beyond doubt that the lips best suited for such topic are those of a bereaved lover." Here, in reality, Poe has combined two themes, love and death. The death of a lovely woman is the theme of nearly all of Poe's best poems, "The Raven," "Annabel Lee," "Ulalume," "Lenore," and "The Sleeper." Although "The Raven" is the best known of these, "The Sleeper" was, in Poe's estimation, a greater poem. "In the higher qualities of poetry," said he, "it is better than 'The Raven'; but there is not one man in a million who could be brought to agree with me in this opinion."

THE SLEEPER

At midnight, in the month of June,
I stand beneath the mystic moon.
An opiate vapor, dewy, dim,
Exhales from out her golden rim,
And, softly dripping, drop by drop,
Upon the quiet mountain top,
Steals drowsily and musically
Into the universal valley.
The rosemary nods upon the grave;
The lily lolls upon the wave;
Wrapping the fog about its breast,

The ruin moulders into rest;
Looking like Lethe, see! the lake
A conscious slumber seems to take,
And would not, for the world, awake.
All Beauty sleeps!—and lo! where lies
Irene, with her Destinies!

Oh, lady bright! can it be right—
This window open to the night?
The wanton airs, from the tree-top,
Laughingly through the lattice drop—
The bodiless airs, a wizard rout,
Flit through thy chamber in and out,
And wave the curtain canopy
So fitfully—so fearfully—
Above the closed and fringèd lid
'Neath which thy slumb'ring soul lies hid,
That, o'er the floor and down the wall,
Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall!
Oh, lady dear, hast thou no fear?
Why and what art thou dreaming here?
Sure thou art come o'er far-off seas,
A wonder to these garden trees!
Strange is thy pallor! strange thy dress!
Strange, above all, thy length of tress,
And this all solemn silentness!

The lady sleeps! Oh, may her sleep
Which is enduring, so be deep!
Heaven have her in its sacred keep!
This chamber changed for one more holy,
This bed for one more melancholy,
I pray to God that she may lie
Forever with unopened eye,
While the pale sheeted ghosts go by!

My love, she sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,
As it is lasting, so be deep!
Soft may the worms about her creep!
Far in the forest, dim and old,
For her may some tall vault unfold—
Some vault that oft hath flung its black
And wingèd panels fluttering back,
Triumphant, o'er the crested palls,
Of her grand family funerals—
Some sepulchre, remote, alone,
Against whose portal she hath thrown,
In childhood, many an idle stone—
Some tomb from out whose sounding door
She ne'er shall force an echo more,
Thrilling to think, poor child of sin!
It was the dead who groaned within.

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)

The death of a beautiful woman is a theme which, like most others, may be treated in narrative and dramatic as well as in lyric poetry. It may also be employed in prose fiction or in sculpture and painting, as every one who has seen Millais's "Ophelia" will recall. In fiction one thinks of the beautiful Amy Robsart in Scott's *Kenilworth*, of Eustacia Vye in Hardy's *Return of the Native*, of Maggie Tulliver in George Eliot's *Mill on the Floss*, and of Zenobia in Hawthorne's *Blithedale Romance*. In Shakespeare's plays one recalls the deaths of Juliet, Desdemona, Cleopatra, and Ophelia. The student should compare the following poems as to sincerity of feeling, beauty of expression, and point of view. He will find it worth while also to look up other notable poems on the same general theme, such as Lamb's

"Hester"; Browning's "My Last Duchess," "Evelyn Hope," and "Porphyria's Lover"; Tennyson's "Lady of Shalott" and "Lancelot and Elaine"; Pope's "Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady"; Landor's "The Death of Artemidora"; Hood's "The Bridge of Sighs"; and Rossetti's "The Blessed Damozel," which was inspired by "The Raven."

In "Highland Mary" and "To Mary in Heaven" Burns celebrated a woman who is now almost as famous as Dante's Beatrice and Petrarch's Laura. Yet little is known of Mary Campbell except that she came from the Scottish Highlands and was probably a nurserymaid. The story of her romantic parting with the poet is familiar. They stood on opposite banks of a little brook, exchanged vows, and parted never to meet again, for five months later Highland Mary was dead. *Drumlie* means muddy; *aft*, often; *sae*, so.

HIGHLAND MARY

Ye banks, and braes, and streams around
  The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
  Your waters never drumlie!
There Simmer first unfauld her robes,
  And there the langest tarry;
For there I took the last fareweel
  O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloom'd the gay green birk,
  How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As underneath their fragrant shade
  I clasp'd her to my bosom!

The golden hours on angel wings
  Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me as light and life
  Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow and lock'd embrace
  Our parting was fu' tender;
And, pledging aft to meet again,
  We tore oursel's asunder;
But oh! fell death's untimely frost,
  That nipt my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
  That wraps my Highland Mary!

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips,
  I aft ha'e kiss'd sae fondly!
And closed for aye the sparkling glance
  That dwelt on me sae kindly!
And mould'ring now in silent dust,
  That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
  Shall live my Highland Mary.

Robert Burns (1759-1796)

If little is known of Highland Mary, less still is definitely known concerning the woman whom, under the name of Lucy, Wordsworth celebrated in three or four beautiful lyrics. The second stanza of the following poem is one of the finest passages in Wordsworth's poems.

SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WAYS

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
  Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
  And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone
  Half hidden from the eye!
—Fair as a star, when only one
  Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
  When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and oh,
  The difference to me!

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

A German critic of the following poem by Landor is said to have remarked that one night is far too little to consecrate to grief for a lost sweetheart; why not a lifetime? But one cannot judge of the sincerity of a man's sorrow by the extravagance of his language. In poetry, as everywhere else, he who says less than he feels is surest to convince us of his sincerity. Rose Aylmer, the daughter of Baron Aylmer, died in India in 1800.

ROSE AYLMER

Ah, what avails the sceptred race,
  Ah, what the form divine!
What every virtue, every grace!
  Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
  May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and of sighs
  I consecrate to thee.

Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864)

Among the shorter poems of Lord Byron, few have been more admired than the following stanzas:

OH! SNATCH'D AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM

Oh! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
  But on thy turf shall roses rear
  Their leaves, the earliest of the year;
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom:

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
  Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
And feed deep thought with many a dream,
  And lingering pause and lightly tread;
  Fond wretch! as if her step disturb'd the dead!

Away! we know that tears are vain,
  That death nor heeds nor hears distress:
Will this unteach us to complain?
  Or make one mourner weep the less?
And thou—who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

George Noel Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824)

Unlike the preceding selections, Matthew Arnold's "Requiescat" is not a love poem. The Latin title means May she rest in peace!

REQUIESCAT

Strew on her roses, roses,
  And never a spray of yew!
In quiet she reposes;
  Ah, would that I did too!

Her mirth the world required;
  She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
  And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
In mazes of heat and sound.
But for peace her soul was yearning,
And now peace laps her round.

Her cabin'd, ample spirit,
It flutter'd and fail'd for breath.
To-night it doth inherit
The vasty hall of death.

Matthew Arnold (1822-1888)

The poems we have quoted are all lyrics. Whittier's "Telling the Bees" is narrative and idyllic. The superstition that, when a member of the family dies, the bees will fly away unless they are told of it, is found in rural districts in New England and the West. The New England summer landscape is here described as skilfully as are the winter scenes in "Snow-Bound."

TELLING THE BEES

Here is the place; right over the hill
Runs the path I took;
You can see the gap in the old wall still,
And the stepping-stones in the shallow brook.

There is the house, with the gate red-barred,
And the poplars tall;
And the barn's brown length, and the cattle-yard,
And the white horns tossing above the wall.

There are the beehives ranged in the sun;
And down by the brink
Of the brook are her poor flowers, weed-o'errun,
Pansy and daffodil, rose and pink.

A year has gone, as the tortoise goes,
Heavy and slow;
And the same rose blows, and the same sun glows,
And the same brook sings of a year ago.

There's the same sweet clover-smell in the breeze;
And the June sun warm
Tangles his wings of fire in the trees,
Setting, as then, over Fernside farm.

I mind me how with a lover's care
From my Sunday coat
I brushed off the burrs, and smoothed my hair,
And cooled at the brookside my brow and throat.

Since we parted, a month had passed,—
To love, a year;
Down through the beeches I looked at last
On the little red gate and the well-sweep near.

I can see it all now,—the slantwise rain
Of light through the leaves,
The sundown's blaze on her window-pane,
The bloom of her roses under the eaves.

Just the same as a month before,—
The house and the trees,
The barn's brown gable, the vine by the door,—
Nothing changed but the hives of bees.

Before them, and under the garden wall,
Forward and back,
Went drearily singing the chore-girl small,
Draping each hive with a shred of black.

Trembling, I listened: the summer sun
Had the chill of snow;

For I knew she was telling the bees of one
  Gone on the journey we all must go!

Then I said to myself, "My Mary weeps
  For the dead to-day:
Haply her blind old grandsire sleeps
  The fret and the pain of his age away."

But her dog whined low; on the doorway sill,
  With his cane to his chin,
The old man sat; and the chore-girl still
  Sang to the bees stealing out and in.

And the song she was singing ever since
  In my ear sounds on:—
"Stay at home, pretty bees, fly not hence!
  Mistress Mary is dead and gone!"

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)

Edna St. Vincent Millay's "Elegy," from *Second April*, is one of a group of beautiful poems dedicated to the memory of a Vassar friend. Does it suffer from comparison with the poems which precede it?

ELEGY

Let them bury your big eyes
In the secret earth securely,
Your thin fingers, and your fair,
Soft, indefinite-colored hair,—
All of these in some way, surely,
From the secret earth shall rise;
Not for these I sit and stare,
Broken and bereft completely;
Your young flesh that sat so neatly

On your little bones will sweetly
Blossom in the air.

But your voice,—never the rushing
Of a river underground,
Not the rising of the wind
In the trees before the rain,
Not the woodcock's watery call,
Not the note the white-throat utters,
Not the feet of children pushing
Yellow leaves along the gutters
In the blue and bitter fall,
Shall content my musing mind
For the beauty of that sound
That in no new way at all
Ever will be heard again.

Sweetly through the sappy stalk
Of the vigorous weed,
Holding all it held before,
Cherished by the faithful sun,
On and on eternally
Shall your altered fluid run,
Bud and bloom and go to seed;
But your singing days are done;
But the music of your talk
Never shall the chemistry
Of the secret earth restore.
All your lovely words are spoken.
Once the ivory box is broken,
Beats the golden bird no more.

Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892-)

It is a noteworthy fact that although many beautiful short lyrics have been inspired by the death of a woman, the great English elegies all express a poet's grief for a

lost friend of his own sex. By common consent, the three greatest English elegies are Milton's "Lycidas," occasioned by the death of a college friend, Edward King; Shelley's "Adonais," a memorial to the poet Keats; and Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, inspired by the death of his friend, Arthur Henry Hallam. To these three a fourth is often added in Matthew Arnold's "Thyrsis," which laments the death of the poet Clough. Other notable poems of the same type are Spenser's "Astrophel," an elegy upon Sir Philip Sidney; Tennyson's "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington"; Swinburne's "Ave atque Vale," an elegy on the French poet Baudelaire; and William Watson's "Lachrimæ Musarum," an elegy on Tennyson. The two greatest American elegies are Emerson's "Threnody," the subject of which is his own son, and Whitman's "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," an elegy on Abraham Lincoln.

Abraham Lincoln is the subject of more great poems than any other American. In fact, no Englishman, if we except the Celtic and possibly unhistorical Arthur, has been made the subject of so many excellent poems. Lincoln's poetic fame is partly due to his tragic death but most of all to the conviction that he is the most thoroughly American of all our great men. "He is," said Emerson, "the true history of the American people in his time." Born in Kentucky of Virginian parents, Lincoln grew up in the Middle West, where Northern and Southern immigrants were being remolded into Americans. Maurice Thompson, an ex-Confederate soldier who, like Lincoln, removed from the South to the Middle West, wrote of him,

He was the North, the South, the East, the West,
The thrall, the master, all of us in one.

The story of Lincoln's rise from the social level of the "poor white trash" to the presidency is, to quote Henry Watterson, an "epic in homespun." Speaking of Lincoln's life, Brand Whitlock says, "Rightly told, it is the epic of America." With the exception of Lee, Lincoln is the one supremely great figure brought forward by the Civil War; and the Civil War is, as we have said before, the one great crisis in our history. Lincoln's death, coming immediately after Appomattox, is as dramatic as that of Julius Cæsar. Lincoln, moreover, is the most many-sided man of our great men. There is something in him which appeals to every man. He was, as a Southern poet, Walter Malone, sums him up in a poem of only four lines:

A blend of mirth and sadness, smiles and tears;
A quaint knight-errant of the pioneers;
A homely hero born of star and sod;
A Peasant Prince; a Masterpiece of God.

Lincoln, for some reason, has played only a small part in drama and fiction. The best of the novels which describe him are *The Crisis,* by Winston Churchill; *The Graysons,* by Edward Eggleston; and *A Man for the Ages,* by Irving Bacheller. The only good Lincoln play is by John Drinkwater, a living English poet and dramatist. In American poetry, however, Lincoln's part is a very large one. The greatest of all Lincoln poems is Walt Whitman's "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," which Swinburne called "the most sonorous

anthem ever chanted in the church of the world." Since this elegy is unfortunately too long for quotation, we give one of Whitman's shorter poems on Lincoln. Owing to the fact that "O Captain! my Captain" is written in rime, it is much better known than Whitman's more characteristic poems.

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;
But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;
Here Captain! dear father!
This arm beneath your head!
It is some dream that on the deck,
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;
Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells!

But I with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

William Cullen Bryant was among the first prominent Easterners to divine the greatness of the homely Western statesman. Bryant presided at Lincoln's Cooper Institute address in February, 1860, and was so much impressed that in the New York *Evening Post*, of which he was editor, he advocated Lincoln's nomination for the presidency. On Lincoln's assassination he wrote the following simple and noble tribute to the martyred president.

THE DEATH OF LINCOLN

Oh, slow to smite and swift to spare,
Gentle and merciful and just!
Who, in the fear of God, didst bear
The sword of power, a nation's trust!

In sorrow by thy bier we stand,
Amid the awe that hushes all,
And speak the anguish of a land
That shook with horror at thy fall.

Thy task is done; the bond are free:
We bear thee to an honored grave,
Whose proudest monument shall be
The broken fetters of the slave.

Pure was thy life; its bloody close
Hath placed thee with the sons of light,
Among the noble host of those
Who perished in the cause of Right.

William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878)

The justest poetic estimate of Lincoln's character and genius is found in Lowell's "Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration" in July, 1865. We quote:

. . . Such was he, our Martyr-Chief,
Whom late the Nation he had led,
With ashes on her head,
Wept with the passion of an angry grief:
Forgive me, if from present things I turn
To speak what in my heart will beat and burn,
And hang my wreath on his world-honored urn.
Nature, they say, doth dote,
And cannot make a man
Save on some worn-out plan,
Repeating us by rote:
For him her Old-World moulds aside she threw,
And choosing sweet clay from the breast
Of the unexhausted West,
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true.
How beautiful to see
Once more a shepherd of mankind indeed,
Who loved his charge, but never loved to lead;
One whose meek flock the people joyed to be,
Not lured by any cheat of birth,
But by his clear-grained human worth,
And brave old wisdom of sincerity!
They knew that outward grace is dust;
They could not choose but trust
In that sure-footed mind's unfaltering skill,
And supple-tempered will
That bent like perfect steel to spring again and thrust.
His was no lonely mountain-peak of mind,
Thrusting to thin air o'er our cloudy bars,
A sea-mark now, now lost in vapors blind;
Broad prairie rather, genial, level-lined,

Fruitful and friendly for all human kind,
Yet also nigh to heaven and loved of loftiest stars.
Nothing of Europe here,
Or, then, of Europe fronting mornward still,
Ere any names of Serf and Peer
Could Nature's equal scheme deface
And thwart her genial will;
Here was a type of the true elder race,
And one of Plutarch's men talked with us face to face.
I praise him not; it were too late;
And some innative weakness there must be
In him who condescends to victory
Such as the Present gives, and cannot wait,
Safe in himself as in a fate.
So always firmly he:
He knew to bide his time,
And can his fame abide,
Still patient in his simple faith sublime,
Till the wise years decide.
Great captains, with their guns and drums,
Disturb our judgment for the hour,
But at last silence comes;
These all are gone, and, standing like a tower,
Our children shall behold his fame.
The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
New birth of our new soil, the first American. . . .

Although there are important poems on Lincoln by Holmes, Whittier, Stoddard, Sill, and Bret Harte, it was not until the last decade or two that Lincoln came fully into his own. There is scarcely a living American poet of importance who has not written a poem about Lincoln. The list includes Edgar Lee Masters, Edwin Arlington Robinson, John Gould Fletcher, Percy Mac-

kaye, Hermann Hagedorn, Vachel Lindsay, James Oppenheim, Edwin Markham, Witter Bynner, Bliss Carman, Arthur Guiterman, Clinton Scollard, Harriet Monroe, Robert Underwood Johnson, Frank Dempster Sherman, and Carl Sandburg. Most of their Lincoln poems can be found in Mary Wright-Davis's interesting anthology, *The Book of Lincoln.*

The finest recent tribute to Lincoln is by Edwin Arlington Robinson. The poem will be clearer if the reader will remember that the speaker is not the poet but one of the many persons who, until after the assassination, did not recognize Lincoln's greatness. So few of Lincoln's contemporaries divined his greatness during his lifetime that Edward Rowland Sill has well asked:

> Were there no crowns on earth,
> No evergreens to wreathe a hero's wreath,
> That he must pass beyond the gates of death,
> Our hero, our slain hero, to be crowned?

THE MASTER

A flying word from here and there
Had sown the name at which we sneered,
But soon the name was everywhere,
To be reviled and then revered:
A presence to be loved and feared,
We cannot hide it, or deny
That we, the gentlemen who jeered,
May be forgotten by and by.

He came when days were perilous
And hearts of men were sore beguiled;
And having made his note of us,

He pondered and was reconciled.
Was ever master yet so mild
As he, and so untamable?
We doubted, even when he smiled,
Not knowing what he knew so well.

He knew that undeceiving fate
Would shame us whom he served unsought;
He knew that he must wince and wait—
The jest of those for whom he fought;
He knew devoutly what he thought
Of us and of our ridicule;
He knew that we must all be taught
Like little children in a school.

We gave a glamour to the task
That he encountered and saw through,
But little of us did he ask,
And little did we ever do.
And what appears if we review
The season when we railed and chaffed?
It is the face of one who knew
That we were learning while we laughed.

The face that in our vision feels
Again the venom that we flung,
Transfigured to the world reveals
The vigilance to which we clung.
Shrewd, hallowed, harassed, and among
The mysteries that are untold,
The face we see was never young,
Nor could it wholly have been old.

For he, to whom we had applied
Our shopman's test of age and worth,
Was elemental when he died,

As he was ancient at his birth:
The saddest among kings of earth,
Bowed with a galling crown, this man
Met rancor with a cryptic mirth,
Laconic—and Olympian.

The love, the grandeur, and the fame
Are bounded by the world alone;
The calm, the smouldering, and the flame
Of awful patience were his own:
With him they are forever flown
Past all our fond self-shadowings,
Wherewith we cumber the Unknown
As with inept, Icarian wings.

For we were not as other men:
'Twas ours to soar and his to see.
But we are coming down again,
And we shall come down pleasantly;
Nor shall we longer disagree
On what it is to be sublime,
But flourish in our perigee
And have one Titan at a time.

Edwin Arlington Robinson (1869-)

So well established is Lincoln today as a world figure that Lloyd George, placing him ahead of Gladstone, Bismarck, and Cavour, has called him "the greatest statesman of the nineteenth century." The war with Germany caused us to realize Lincoln's greatness as we had never realized it before. During the war we felt that, as Arthur Guiterman expressed it,

Here truth must triumph, honour must prevail:
The nation Lincoln died for cannot fail.

One of the best poems occasioned by the war against Germany is Vachel Lindsay's "Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight." Lindsay's home is in Springfield, Illinois, where Lincoln practiced law until his election to the presidency. The poem was written in 1914, nearly three years before America entered the war; and it reflects our first feeling that the war was the result of imperialistic ambitions on both sides.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN WALKS AT MIDNIGHT

(In Springfield, Illinois)

It is portentous, and a thing of state
That here at midnight, in our little town
A mourning figure walks, and will not rest,
Near the old court-house pacing up and down,

Or by his homestead, or in shadowed yards
He lingers where his children used to play,
Or through the market, on the well-worn stones
He stalks until the dawn-stars burn away.

A bronzed, lank man! His suit of ancient black,
A famous high top-hat and plain worn shawl
Make him the quaint great figure that men love,
The prairie-lawyer, master of us all.

He cannot sleep upon his hillside now.
He is among us:—as in times before!
And we who toss and lie awake for long,
Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass the door.

His head is bowed. He thinks of men and kings,
Yea, when the sick world cries, how can he sleep?

Too many peasants fight, they know not why;
Too many homesteads in black terror weep.

The sins of all the war-lords burn his heart.
He sees the dreadnaughts scouring every main.
He carries on his shawl-wrapped shoulders now
The bitterness, the folly and the pain.

He cannot rest until a spirit-dawn
Shall come:—the shining hope of Europe free:
A league of sober folk, the Workers' Earth,
Bringing long peace to Cornland, Alp, and Sea.

It breaks his heart that things must murder still,
That all his hours of travail here for men
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring white peace
That he may sleep upon his hill again?

Vachel Lindsay (1879-)

In the last analysis, there are only two themes in all poetry, man and his environment. Poems which deal with one part of man's environment, external nature, are very numerous. Poems which describe man's surroundings, country and city alike, interest us because of their intimate relation to our own lives. "In our life alone does Nature live," said Coleridge. William Watson has aptly expressed the same idea in an epigram:

For metaphors of man we search the skies,
And find our allegory in all the air.
We gaze on Nature with Narcissus' eyes,
Enamour'd of our shadow everywhere.

Our feeling about nature, which we often significantly spell with a capital letter, is a distinctly modern thing.

Petrarch, the great Italian sonneteer of the Renaissance, was the first man on record who climbed a mountain for pleasure; but it is not until the eighteenth century that we find, in the poems of James Thomson and Lady Winchilsea, the beginnings of modern nature poetry. After "a very troublesome journey over the Alps" in 1701, Addison wrote, "My head is still giddy with mountains and precipices; and you cannot imagine how much I am pleased with the sight of a plain!" Gray, after a similar journey in 1739, wrote of the Alps, "Not a precipice, not a torrent, not a cliff, but is pregnant with religion and poetry."

Although there are many beautiful and vivid descriptions of nature in the poems of Gray, Collins, Cowper, and Burns, it was not until the first quarter of the nineteenth century that nature poetry came into its own. Since that time external nature has been a stock poetic theme; and even today a poet's sensitiveness to beauty is too often judged solely by his response to beautiful landscapes. Romantic and Victorian literature is peculiarly rich in nature poetry. Scott's *Lady of the Lake* is said to have sent tourists by the thousand to visit the Trossachs; and Byron's descriptions of continental scenes in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* were so successful that, as he expressed it, he awoke one morning to find himself famous. The poems of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Landor, Shelley, Keats, Tennyson, Arnold, Browning, Morris, and Swinburne are full of descriptions of beautiful landscapes. These lines from "A Garden by the Sea," by William Morris, are unforgettable:

I know a little garden-close,
Set thick with lily and red rose,
Where I would wander if I might
From dewy morn to dewy night,
And have one with me wandering.

The greatest nature poet of all time is William Wordsworth. No other poet ever observed or described more accurately or more magically the phenomena of nature. Nothing escaped him that could be seen, heard, or in any other way perceived. At the same time Wordsworth read more into nature than any other poet.

To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

For Wordsworth, nature held the answer to the riddle of existence, as it did for Tennyson, who was echoing Wordsworth when he wrote the following suggestive poem.

FLOWER IN THE CRANNIED WALL

Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but *if* I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

Wordsworth's attitude toward nature is best expressed in his "Tintern Abbey," which, though written in blank verse, has the qualities of a great ode. To Wordsworth, nature is a delight, a comforter, and a temple where one

may commune with the Spirit of the universe. His poetic creed is entwined with a semi-pantheistic conception of nature.

> I have learned
> To look on nature, not as in the hour
> Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
> The still, sad music of humanity,
> Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
> To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
> A motion and a spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
> A lover of the meadows and the woods,
> And mountains . . .
> . . . well pleased to recognise
> In nature and the language of the sense,
> The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
> The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
> Of all my moral being.

Sometimes the work of the nature poet tempts a comparison with that of the landscape painter; and it is surprising how well the poem bears comparison with the picture. One of Wordsworth's greatest poems was suggested by a painting of Sir George Beaumont. Wordsworth gives two pictures of Peele Castle, one in calm and one in storm; and he makes each picture symbolic of a different conception of life. The poet's mood is colored

by his grief for the death of his brother John, who was a sailor. The clumsy title is characteristic of Wordsworth.

ELEGIAC STANZAS

Suggested by a Picture of Peele Castle, in a Storm, Painted by Sir George Beaumont

I was thy neighbour once, thou rugged pile!
Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee:
I saw thee every day; and all the while
Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air!
So like, so very like, was day to day!
Whene'er I looked, thy Image still was there;
It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm! it seemed no sleep;
No mood, which season takes away, or brings:
I could have fancied that the mighty Deep
Was even the gentlest of all gentle Things.

Ah! THEN, if mine had been the Painter's hand,
To express what then I saw; and add the gleam,
The light that never was, on sea or land,
The consecration, and the Poet's dream;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary Pile,
Amid a world how different from this!
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile;
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-house divine
Of peaceful years; a chronicle of heaven;—

Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine
The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A Picture had it been of lasting ease,
Elysian quiet, without toil or strife;
No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
Such Picture would I at that time have made:
And seen the soul of truth in every part,
A stedfast peace that might not be betrayed.

So once it would have been,—'tis so no more;
I have submitted to a new control:
A power is gone, which nothing can restore;
A deep distress hath humanised my Soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold
A smiling sea, and be what I have been:
The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old;
This, which I know, I speak with mind serene.

Then, Beaumont, Friend! who would have been the Friend,
If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore,
This work of thine I blame not, but commend;
This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

O 'tis a passionate Work!—yet wise and well,
Well chosen is the spirit that is here;
That Hulk which labours in the deadly swell,
This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear!

And this huge Castle, standing here sublime,
I love to see the look with which it braves,
Cased in the unfeeling armour of old time,
The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,
Housed in a dream, at distance from the Kind!
Such happiness, wherever it be known,
Is to be pitied; for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,
And frequent sights of what is to be borne!
Such sights, or worse, as are before me here.—
Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

The scientific discoveries of Darwin and others had a marked effect upon the nature poetry of the Victorian period. To the poets it seemed that science was robbing nature of its poetry. Keats, in an earlier period, had thought that the spectrum analysis spoiled the rainbow for poetic purposes. Poe wrote in his "Sonnet—To Science":

> Vulture, whose wings are dull realities,
> How should we love thee? . . .
> Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car?
> And driven the Hamadryad from the wood
> To seek a shelter in some happier star?
> Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood,
> The Elfin from the green grass, and from me
> The summer dream beneath the tamarind tree?

With Tennyson and Arnold the effect of scientific discoveries was far more serious. They found it difficult to believe not only in creatures of the imagination like elves and fairies, but even in the God whom Wordsworth had seen everywhere in nature. To Tennyson, mourning the death of his friend Hallam, it seemed for a time im-

possible to believe in God or personal immortality. Nature, to which Wordsworth had gone for consolation after witnessing the horrors of the French Revolution, now seemed man's enemy. Darwin's theory of evolution revealed that all nature was at war. Tennyson's *In Memoriam* was written before the publication in 1859 of *The Origin of Species*, but science had already begun to ask such questions as Tennyson raises:

> Are God and Nature then at strife,
> That Nature lends such evil dreams?
> So careful of the type she seems,
> So careless of the single life.

But this is not the worst. Tennyson continues:

> "So careful of the type?" but no.
> From scarpèd cliff and quarried stone
> She cries, "A thousand types are gone:
> I care for nothing, all shall go.
>
> "Thou makest thine appeal to me:
> I bring to life, I bring to death;
> The spirit does but mean the breath:
> I know no more." And he, shall he,
>
> Man, her last work, who seem'd so fair,
> Such splendid purpose in his eyes,
> Who roll'd the psalm to wintry skies,
> Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,
>
> Who trusted God was love indeed
> And love Creation's final law—
> Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw
> With ravine, shriek'd against his creed—

Who loved, who suffer'd countless ills,
  Who battled for the True, the Just,
  Be blown about the desert dust,
Or seal'd within the iron hills?

No more? A monster then, a dream,
  A discord. Dragons of the prime,
  That tare each other in their slime,
Were mellow music match'd with him.

O life as futile, then, as frail!
  O for thy voice to soothe and bless!
  What hope of answer, or redress?
Behind the veil, behind the veil.

In the end Tennyson recovered his faith in God and nature; but Matthew Arnold did not. Nothing is more pathetic than Arnold's confession, after his painful search through history for proof of the existence of God, that all he could discover was an indication of some force outside of ourselves which makes for righteousness. In "Dover Beach" Arnold confesses his inability to believe in God and a future life. Though the metrical scheme of the poem is irregular, the changes in rime and length of line harmonize perfectly with the changing thoughts of the poet.

DOVER BEACH

The sea is calm to-night,
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits;—on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.

Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd land,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.
Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

Matthew Arnold (1822-1888)

"In a Wood," by Thomas Hardy, best known as a novelist but also important as a poet, shows the influence of the scientific conception of nature as a perpetual field of battle between the various forms of life. Unlike Wordsworth, Hardy, finding no comfort in nature, returns to his own kind.

IN A WOOD

Pale beech and pine so blue,
  Set in one clay,
Bough to bough cannot you
  Live out your day?
When the rains skim and skip,
Why mar sweet comradeship,
Blighting with poison-drip
  Neighbourly spray?

Heart-halt and spirit-lame,
  City-opprest,
Unto this wood I came
  As to a nest;
Dreaming that sylvan peace
Offered the harrowed ease—
Nature a soft release
  From men's unrest.

But, having entered in,
  Great growths and small
Show them to men akin—
  Combatants all!
Sycamore shoulders oak,

Bines the slim sapling yoke,
Ivy-spun halters choke
  Elms stout and tall.

Touches from ash, O wych,
  Sting you like scorn!
You, too, brave hollies, twitch
  Sidelong from thorn.
Even the rank poplars bear
Lothly a rival's air,
Cankering in black despair
  If overborne.

Since, then, no grace I find
  Taught me of trees,
Turn I back to my kind,
  Worthy as these.
There at least smiles abound,
There discourse trills around,
There, now and then, are found
  Life-loyalties.

Thomas Hardy (1840-)

When we turn to more recent writers, we find that, though the poetry of nature is less in vogue than it was a century ago, nature poems of a high degree of excellence are still being written. In England Masefield, Noyes, Walter de la Mare, and others have all used natural backgrounds effectively. In our own country Robinson and Frost describe the New England landscape, which somehow seems more bleak than in the poems of Emerson, Whittier, and Lowell. One of the most popular of recent nature poems is Joyce Kilmer's "Trees."

TREES *

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the sweet earth's flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

Joyce Kilmer (1886-1918)

No living American poet has written better nature poetry than John Hall Wheelock. "Earth," which we quote, contains some of the best lines to be found in contemporary poetry; his "Storm and Sun" and "Golden Noon" are almost if not quite as beautifully done. Wheelock's last volume, *Dust and Light*,—no poet ever gave a happier title to a book,—contains also some of the best of contemporary love poems. It will be noted that in "Trees" and "Earth" poets have found a way to harmonize the poetic and the scientific views of nature.

* From Joyce Kilmer: *Poems, Essays and Letters*, copyright, 1918, George H. Doran Company, Publishers.

EARTH

Grasshopper, your fairy song
And my poem alike belong
To the dark and silent earth
From which all poetry has birth;
All we say and all we sing
Is but as the murmuring
Of that drowsy heart of hers
When from her deep dream she stirs:
If we sorrow, or rejoice,
You and I are but her voice.

Deftly does the dust express
In mind her hidden loveliness,
And from her cool silence stream
The cricket's cry and Dante's dream;
For the earth that breeds the trees
Breeds cities too, and symphonies.
Equally her beauty flows
Into a savior, or a rose—
Looks down in dream, and from above
Smiles at herself in Jesus' love.
Christ's love and Homer's art
Are but the workings of her heart;
Through Leonardo's hand she seeks
Herself, and through Beethoven speaks
In holy thunderings around
The awful message of the ground.

The serene and humble mold
Does in herself all selves enfold—
Kingdoms, destinies, and creeds,
Great dreams, and dauntless deeds,
Science that metes the firmament,

The high, inflexible intent
Of one for many sacrificed—
Plato's brain, the heart of Christ;
All love, all legend, and all lore
Are in the dust forevermore.

Even as the growing grass
Up from the soil religions pass,
And the field that bears the rye
Bears parables and prophecy.
Out of the earth the poem grows
Like the lily, or the rose;
And all man is, or yet may be.
Is but herself in agony
Toiling up the steep ascent
Toward the complete accomplishment
When all dust shall be, the whole
Universe, one conscious soul.

Yea, the quiet and cool sod
Bears in her breast the dream of God.

If you would know what earth is, scan
The intricate, proud heart of man,
Which is the earth articulate,
And learn how holy and how great,
How limitless and how profound
Is the nature of the ground—
How without terror or demur
We may entrust ourselves to her
When we are wearied out, and lay
Our faces in the common clay.

For she is pity, she is love,
All wisdom, she, all thoughts that move
About her everlasting breast

Till she gathers them to rest:
All tenderness of all the ages,
Seraphic secrets of the sages,
Vision and hope of all the seers,
All prayer, all anguish, and all tears
Are but the dust, that from her dream
Awakes, and knows herself supreme—
Are but the earth, when she reveals
All that her secret heart conceals
Down in the dark and silent loam,
Which is ourselves, asleep, at home.

Yea, and this, my poem, too,
Is part of her as dust and dew,
Wherein herself she doth declare
Through my lips, and say her prayer.

John Hall Wheelock (1886-)

It is a curious and notable fact that until recently the great majority of poets neglected the city as though only the country supplied suitable material for poetry. After a visit to a cotton mill, Goethe said that it was the most poetical sight he had ever witnessed; but has Goethe or any other poet ever written a great poem about a cotton mill? Novelists and dramatists learned long ago how to handle modern city types and backgrounds; but while the Victorian novelists were describing life in London, Tennyson was writing about Lincolnshire wolds or Camelot. Poetry is the most conservative of the arts, and the last, in some respects, to come in touch with the actual life of the author's own time. Its language tends to be archaic, its themes traditional. For over a hundred years poets generally echoed Cowper's line, "God made the country

and man made the town." The continued neglect of the city seems absurd when we remember that during this very period practically all of the poets and most of their readers lived in cities. Today over one-half of the population of the United States is urban, and England has been an industrial nation for over a century. Contemporary poets rebel against the notion that only woods, lakes, and mountains offer suitable material for poetry.

Older poems which deal with the city generally describe the romantic cities of Europe, Venice, Rome, or Athens. One recalls Poe's "The Coliseum" and the descriptions of Rome in Byron's *Manfred* and *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. We quote part of the famous passage in the fourth canto of the latter poem:

Oh Rome! my country! City of the soul!
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,
Lone mother of dead empires! and control
In their shut breasts their petty misery.
What are our woes and sufferance? Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, Ye!
Whose agonies are evils of a day—
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

The Niobe of nations! there she stands
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe;
An empty urn within her withered hands,
Whose holy dust was scattered long ago;
The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now;
The very sepulchers lie tenantless
Of their heroic dwellers; dost thou flow,
Old Tiber! through a marble wilderness?
Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress.

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War, Flood, and Fire
Have dealt upon the seven-hilled city's pride;
She saw her glories star by star expire,
And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride,
Where the car climbed the Capitol; far and wide
Temple and tower went down, nor left a site:
Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void,
O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,
And say, "Here was, or is," where all is doubly night?

The older poet usually hated the typical city of his generation. For him the city of his day represented greed and commercialism, blindness to beautiful and permanent things.

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!

This Wordsworthian hatred of materialism is powerfully expressed in Bret Harte's "San Francisco," from which the following stanzas are taken:

O lion's whelp, that hidest fast
In jungle growth of spire and mast!

I know thy cunning and thy greed,
Thy hard high lust and wilful deed,

And all thy glory loves to tell
Of specious gifts material.

Wordsworth's magnificent sonnet, "Westminster Bridge," is a striking exception to the Romantic attitude

toward the town and the country. For once the great nature poet saw and painted with unrivaled skill the beauty of a great city.

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE

September 3, 1802

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

Something of the modern poetic attitude toward the city can be found in the poems of Bryant and Browning. "The Crowded Street" and the "Hymn of the City" show that Bryant found God in the city as well as in the primeval forest. In the following poem by Browning city and country life are contrasted by an Italian whom the high cost of living has compelled, against his will, to live in the country. Browning's own point of view, it need hardly be said, is not identical with that of the speaker.

UP AT A VILLA—DOWN IN THE CITY

(As Distinguished by an Italian Person of Quality)

Had I but plenty of money, money enough and to spare,
The house for me, no doubt, were a house in the city-square;
Ah, such a life, such a life, as one leads at the window there!

Something to see, by Bacchus, something to hear, at least!
There, the whole day long, one's life is a perfect feast;
While up at a villa one lives, I maintain it, no more than a beast.

Well now, look at our villa! stuck like the horn of a bull
Just on a mountain-edge as bare as the creature's skull,
Save a mere shag of a bush with hardly a leaf to pull!
—I scratch my own, sometimes, to see if the hair's turned wool.

But the city, oh the city—the square with the houses! Why?
They are stone-faced, white as a curd, there's something to take the eye!
Houses in four straight lines, not a single front awry;
You watch who crosses and gossips, who saunters, who hurries by;
Green blinds, as a matter of course, to draw when the sun gets high;
And the shops with fanciful signs which are painted properly.

What of a villa? Though winter be over in March by rights,
'Tis May perhaps ere the snow shall have withered well off the heights:
You've the brown ploughed land before, where the oxen steam and wheeze,
And the hills over-smoked behind by the faint gray olive-trees.

Is it better in May, I ask you? You've summer all at once;
In a day he leaps complete with a few strong April suns.
'Mid the sharp short emerald wheat, scarce risen three fingers well,
The wild tulip, at the end of its tube, blows out its great red bell
Like a thin clear bubble of blood, for the children to pick and sell.

Is it ever hot in the square? There's a fountain to spout and to splash!
In the shade it sings and springs; in the shine such foambows flash
On the horses with curling fish-tails, that prance and paddle and pash
Round the lady atop in her conch—fifty gazers do not abash,
Though all that she wears is some weeds round her waist in a sort of sash.

All the year long at the villa, nothing to see though you linger,
Except yon cypress that points like death's lean lifted forefinger.
Some think fireflies pretty, when they mix i' the corn and mingle,
Or thrid the stinking hemp till the stalks of it seem a-tingle.
Late August or early September, the stunning cicala is shrill,
And the bees keep their tiresome whine round the resinous firs on the hill.
Enough of the seasons,—I spare you the months of the fever and chill.

Ere you open your eyes in the city, the blessed church-bells begin:
No sooner the bells leave off than the diligence rattles in:
You get the pick of the news, and it costs you never a pin.

By and by there's the travelling doctor gives pills, lets blood, draws teeth;
Or the Pulcinello-trumpet breaks up the market beneath.
At the post-office such a scene-picture—the new play, piping hot!
And a notice how, only this morning, three liberal thieves were shot.
Above it, behold the Archbishop's most fatherly of rebukes,
And beneath, with his crown and his lion, some little new law of the Duke's!
Or a sonnet with flowery marge, to the Reverend Don So-and so,
Who is Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarca, Saint Jerome, and Cicero,
"And moreover," (the sonnet goes rhyming,) "the skirts of Saint Paul has reached,
Having preached us those six Lent-lectures more unctuous than ever he preached."
Noon strikes,—here sweeps the procession! our Lady borne smiling and smart
With a pink gauze gown all spangles, and seven swords stuck in her heart!
Bang-whang-whang goes the drum, *tootle-te-tootle* the fife;
No keeping one's haunches still: it's the greatest pleasure in life.

But bless you, it's dear—it's dear; fowls, wine, at double the rate.
They have clapped a new tax upon salt, and what oil pays passing the gate
It's a horror to think of. And so, the villa for me, not the city!

Beggars can scarcely be choosers: but still—ah, the pity, the pity!
Look, two and two go the priests, then the monks with cowls and sandals,

And the penitents dressed in white shirts, a-holding the yellow
candles;
One, he carries a flag up straight, and another a cross with
handles,
And the Duke's guard brings up the rear, for the better
prevention of scandals:
Bang whang-whang goes the drum, tootle-te-tootle the fife.
Oh, a day in the city-square, there's no such pleasure in life!

Robert Browning (*1812-1889*)

The first poet who deliberately tried to put the city into poetry was Walt Whitman, who believed that all life is intrinsically poetic. Whitman loved New York as Charles Lamb loved London, as few poets ever loved any city. "A Broadway Pageant," "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry," and "Mannahatta" are all attempts to picture the multifarious life of the American metropolis. Among the contemporary American poets who have followed in Whitman's footsteps, none has more successfully painted the city than John Gould Fletcher.

BROADWAY'S CANYON

I

This is like the nave of an unfinished cathedral
With steep shadowy sides.
Light and shade alternate,
Repeat and die away.
Golden traceries of sunlight,
Blue buttresses of shadow,
Answer like pier and column,
All the way down to the sea.

But the temple is still roofless:
Only the sky above it
Closes it round, encircling
With its weightless vault of blue.
There is no image or inscription or altar,
And the clamor of free-moving multitudes
Are its tireless organ tones,
While the hammers beat out its chimes.

II

Blue grey smoke swings heavily,
Fuming from leaden censers,
Upwards about the street.
Lamps glimmer with crimson points of flame.
The black canyon
Bares its gaunt, stripped sides.
Heavily, oppressively, the skies roll on above it,
Like curses yet unfulfilled.
The wind shrieks and crashes,
The burly trucks rumble;
Ponderous as funeral-cars, undraped, and unstrewn with flowers.

John Gould Fletcher (1886-)

In "Chicago" Carl Sandburg has given a vivid and powerful impression of the city in which he lives. If one should object that the picture is not beautiful, the poet's answer would be that Chicago's chief characteristic is not beauty but power.

CHICAGO

Hog-Butcher for the World,
Tool-maker, Stacker of Wheat,
Player with Railroads and the Nation's Freight-handler;

Stormy, husky, brawling,
City of the Big Shoulders:

They tell me you are wicked and I believe them, for I have seen your painted women under the gas lamps luring the farm boys.
And they tell me you are crooked, and I answer, Yes, it is true I have seen the gunman kill and go free to kill again.
And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is, On the faces of women and children I have seen the marks of wanton hunger.
And having answered so I turn once more to those who sneer at this my city, and I give them back the sneer and say to them:
Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so proud to be alive and coarse and strong and cunning.
Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on job, here is a tall bold slugger set vivid against the little soft cities;
Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning as a savage pitted against the wilderness,
Bareheaded,
Shoveling,
Wrecking,
Planning,
Building, breaking, rebuilding,
Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with white teeth,
Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a young man laughs,
Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who has never lost a battle,
Bragging and laughing that under his wrist is the pulse, and under his ribs the heart of the people,
Laughing!

Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling laughter of youth; half-naked, sweating, proud to be Hog-butcher, Tool-maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player with Railroads, and Freight-handler to the Nation.

Carl Sandburg (1878-)

Is this poetry at all? some readers will inevitably ask. Others will raise the question, Is our industrial life, our machinery, proper material for poetry? We believe they are proper but enormously difficult subjects for poetry. We would not say that these subjects are any better than others, but that no one has the right to exclude these, or any other themes, from the world of poetry. Under certain conditions, science, invention, and machinery are proper subjects for poetry; and no one has better explained these conditions than Wordsworth. "Poetry," said he, "is as immortal as the heart of man. If the labors of the men of science should ever create any material revolution, direct or indirect, in our condition . . . the poet . . . will be ready to follow the steps of the man of science. . . . The remotest discoveries of the chemist, the botanist or mineralogist will be as proper objects of the poet's art as any upon which it can be employed, if the time should ever come when these things shall be familiar to us, and . . . manifestly and palpably material to us as enjoying and suffering beings."

Has not this time come? Today the majority of us live in towns. Our civilization is industrial; it is based largely on the intelligent use of machinery. And yet, so slow were the poets to respond to changing conditions, that the first transatlantic steamer had crossed the Atlantic over half a century before Kipling wrote his "M'An-

drews' Hymn," one of the first great poems dealing with machinery. In "The King," quoted in the succeeding chapter, Kipling protests against the notion that modern machinery is not poetic. In this field also Walt Whitman was something of a pioneer.

TO A LOCOMOTIVE IN WINTER

Thee for my recitative,
Thee in the driving storm even as now, the snow, the winter-day declining,
Thee in thy panoply, thy measur'd dual throbbing and thy beat convulsive,
Thy black cylindric body, golden brass and silvery steel,
Thy ponderous side-bars, parallel and connecting rods, gyrating, shuttling at thy sides,
Thy metrical, now swelling pant and roar, now tapering in the distance,
Thy great protruding head-light fix'd in front,
Thy long, pale, floating vapor-pennants, tinged with delicate purple,
The dense and murky clouds out-belching from thy smoke-stack,
Thy knitted frame, thy springs and valves, the tremulous twinkle of thy wheels,
Thy train of cars behind, obedient, merrily following,
Through gale or calm, now swift, now slack, yet steadily careering;
Type of the modern—emblem of motion and power—pulse of the continent,
For once come serve the Muse and merge in verse, even as here I see thee,
With storm and buffeting gusts of wind and falling snow,
By day thy warning ringing bell to sound its notes,
By night thy silent signal lamps to swing.

Fierce-throated beauty!
Roll through my chant with all thy lawless music, thy swinging lamps at night,
Thy madly-whistled laughter, echoing, rumbling like an earthquake, rousing all,
Law of thyself complete, thine own track firmly holding,
(No sweetness debonair of tearful harp or glib piano thine,)
Thy trills of shrieks by rocks and hills return'd,
Launch'd o'er the prairies wide, across the lakes,
To the free skies unpent and glad and strong.

Walt Whitman (*1819-1891*)

The movement for beautifying American cities has found expression in the poems of Vachel Lindsay. "The things most worth while," he says, "are one's own hearth and neighborhood. We should make our own home and neighborhood the most democratic, the most beautiful and the holiest in the world." Like other poets, he protests against the greed, the ugliness, and the commercialism of most large cities.

ON THE BUILDING OF SPRINGFIELD

Let not our town be large—remembering
That little Athens was the Muses' home;
That Oxford rules the heart of London still,
That Florence gave the Renaissance to Rome.

Record it for the grandson of your son—
A city is not builded in a day:
Our little town cannot complete her soul
Till countless generations pass away.

Now let each child be joined as to a church
To her perpetual hopes, each man ordained;

Let every street be made a reverent aisle
  Where music grows, and beauty is unchained.

Let Science and Machinery and Trade
  Be slaves of her, and make her all in all—
Building against our blatant restless time
  An unseen, skillful mediæval wall.

Let every citizen be rich toward God.
  Let Christ, the beggar, teach divinity—
Let no man rule who holds his money dear.
  Let this, our city, be our luxury.

We should build parks that students from afar
  Would choose to starve in, rather than go home—
Fair little squares, with Phidian ornament—
  Food for the spirit, milk and honeycomb.

Songs shall be sung by us in that good day—
  Songs we have written—blood within the rhyme
Beating, as when old England still was glad,
  The purple, rich, Elizabethan time.

Say, is my prophecy too fair and far?
  I only know, unless her faith be high,
The soul of this our Nineveh is doomed,
  Our little Babylon will surely die.

Some city on the breast of Illinois
  No wiser and no better at the start,
By faith shall rise redeemed—by faith shall rise
  Bearing the western glory in her heart—

The genius of the Maple, Elm and Oak,
  The secret hidden in each grain of corn—

The glory that the prairie angels sing
  At night when sons of Life and Love are born—

Born but to struggle, squalid and alone,
  Broken and wandering in their early years.
When will they make our dusty streets their goal,
  Within our attics hide their sacred tears?

When will they start our vulgar blood athrill
  With living language—words that set us free?
When will they make a path of beauty clear
  Between our riches and our liberty?

We must have many Lincoln-hearted men—
  A city is not builded in a day—
And they must do their work, and come and go
  While countless generations pass away.

Vachel Lindsay (*1879-*)

In many of the Western states the transition from one stage of civilization to the next succeeding stage has been phenomenally rapid. Centuries have been compressed into decades, and decades into a day. The frontiersman—scout, hunter, miner, or cowboy—is speedily followed by the farmer, who fences in the open prairie, builds a home, and raises cotton or wheat. The farmer, in turn, is often driven further west by the city, with its shops, factories, and railways. In this last stage the West has become a second East. Although few Easterners have suspected it, Texas has almost wholly lost her cowboys and the picturesque life of the cattle ranch. Not only that, for after being for two or more decades a leading agricultural state, Texas has already entered

the stage of industrial development. What not a few old-time Texans feel as they contrast the picturesque Texas which is gone with the hustling commercialistic Texas which is at hand, Texans have left to an Eastern poet, Amy Lowell, to tell.

TEXAS

I went a-riding, a-riding,
Over a great long plain.
And the plain went a-sliding, a-sliding
Away from my bridle-rein.

Fields of cotton, and fields of wheat,
Thunder-blue gentians by a wire fence,
Standing cypress, red and tense,
Holding its flower rigid like a gun,
Dressed for parade by the running wheat,
By the little bouncing cotton. Terribly sweet
The cardinals sing in the live-oak trees,
And the long plain breeze,
The prairie breeze,
Blows across from swell to swell
With a ginger smell.
Just ahead, where the road curves round,
A long-eared rabbit makes a bound
Into a wheat-field, into a cotton-field,
His track glitters after him and goes still again
Over to the left of my bridle-rein.

But over to the right is a glare—glare—glare—
Of sharp glass windows.
A narrow square of brick jerks thickly up above the cotton plants,

A raucous mercantile thing flaring the sun from thirty-six windows,
Brazenly declaring itself to the lovely fields.
Tram-cars run like worms about the feet of this thing,
The coffins of cotton-bales feed it,
The threshed wheat is its golden blood.
But here it has no feet,
It has only the steep ironic grin of its thirty-six windows,
Only its basilisk eyes counting the fields,
Doing sums of how many buildings to a city, all day and all night.

Once they went a-riding, a-riding,
Over the great long plain.
Cowboys singing to their dogey steers,
Cowboys perched on forty-dollar saddles,
Riding to the North, six months to get there,
Six months to reach Wyoming.
"Hold up, paint horse, herd the little dogies.
Over the lone prairie."
Bones of dead steers,
Bones of cowboys,
Under the wheat, maybe.

The sky-scraper sings another way,
A tune of steel, of wheels, of gold.
And the ginger breeze blows, blows all day
Tanged with flowers and mold.
And the Texas sky whirls down, whirls down,
Taking long looks at the fussy town.
An old sky and a long plain
Beyond, beyond, my bridle-rein.

Amy Lowell (1874-)

In reality, something of the traditional hostility of the poets to the cities will continue while selfish men live in

them and run them for their own selfish ends. The old attitude re-appears with a new emphasis in the following poem in prose by Lord Dunsany, who looks upon the great city as a violent distortion of the purpose of nature.

THE PRAYER OF THE FLOWERS *

It was the voice of the flowers on the West wind, the lovable, the old, the lazy West wind, blowing ceaselessly, blowing sleepily, going Greecewards.

"The Woods have gone away, they have fallen and left us; men love us no longer, we are lonely by moonlight. Great engines rush over the beautiful fields, their ways lie hard and terrible up and down the land.

"The cancrous cities spread over the grass, they clatter in their lairs continually, they glitter about us blemishing the night.

"The Woods are gone, O Pan, the woods, the woods. And thou art far, O Pan, and far away."

I was standing by night between two railway embankments on the edge of a Midland city. On one of them I saw the trains go by, once in every two minutes, and on the other, the trains went by twice in every five.

Quite close were the glaring factories, and the sky above them wore the fearful look that it wears in dreams of fever.

The flowers were right in the stride of that advancing city, and thence I heard them sending up their cry. And then I heard, beating musically up wind, the voice of Pan reproving them from Arcady—"Be patient a little, these things are not for long."

Lord Dunsany (*1878-*)

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CHAPTER XII

THE CONTEMPORARY POETS

Lo, with the ancient
Roots of man's nature,
Twines the eternal
  Passion of song.

Ever Love fans it,
Ever Life feeds it;
Time cannot age it,
  Death cannot slay.
William Watson: "England my Mother"

We are living in a poetic age. It is a little difficult to grasp this fact until one recalls the status of poetry some twenty years ago. In 1900 the public read little beside fiction; the short story was in its heyday. A volume of verse was something to be printed at the author's expense and read only by the poet's friends. The few poems that were published were, in the main, thin and bookish re-echoings of older poets. Poetry had nearly lost its contact with life. Only those writers who cultivated light verse and the French forms were making any real advance. In England twenty years ago there was no younger poet of first importance except Kipling. In America the older New England poets were all dead, and

such poets as were writing were not widely read. Edmund Clarence Stedman, Madison Cawein, and William Vaughn Moody did not write the kind of poetry which many persons will ever care to read. Even as recently as 1910, only one of the strictly contemporary American poets had begun to write: this was Edwin Arlington Robinson, then almost entirely unknown. Foreign observers might well imagine that America was too materialistic ever to produce a supremely great poet. We even said the same thing of ourselves. Some shared Macaulay's opinion that "as civilization advances, poetry almost necessarily declines."

Today, however, no poet has cause to lament, like Milton, that he is "fallen on evil days," for never before in the history of the world were so many people interested in poetry. The evidence is unmistakable. There are numerous magazines devoted wholly to poetry. Many of the older publications, which in 1910 used verse only as a "filler," now make it a feature. In recent years both publishers and authors have been known to reap large profits from a volume of verse. Nor is this all. At hundreds of club meetings and popular lectures recent poetry is being read and discussed. Numerous handbooks and anthologies have been published to meet the widespread demand for information in regard to contemporary poets. Most remarkable fact of all perhaps, present-day poetry has at last received recognition in that conservative quarter, the college curriculum. If we except the little community around Boston in the middle of the last century, nothing like this wide interest in poetry has ever been known in America.

One of the most striking aspects of contemporary poetry is its re-conquest of much of the territory which verse had lost to prose. When literature emerged from the twilight obscurity of prehistoric times, it consisted solely of poetry; prose was a later development. The Greeks had no Muse for either the novel or the short story. Ever since the invention of printing, prose has encroached more and more upon the narrowing confines of poetry. The novel, the short story, and the essay rendered the epic and the ballad well-nigh obsolete. It began to look as though poetry were to be limited to the lyric. For a decade or more—if we except certain brilliant young novelists who have come into prominence within the last two or three years—prose fiction has been conventional and inferior in quality; this is especially true of America. The short story in particular has become stereotyped, machine-made, and out of touch with life. Hence those writers who have stories to tell now frequently turn to poetry as a freer medium of expression. The best of the poems of Noyes and Masefield, of Frost, Robinson, Masters, and Amy Lowell are narrative.

We shall discuss the British poets first because they illustrate, better than the American, the transition from the older poetry to the new. In English poetry we find two strongly contrasted groups of poets, who, for want of more exact terms, are usually called the conservatives and the radicals. Among the conservatives we may class William Watson; Robert Bridges, the poet laureate; Alfred Noyes; and three poets no longer living, Stephen Phillips, Andrew Lang, and Austin Dobson. The best

known poets of the radical group are John Masefield and Wilfrid Wilson Gibson. With them we may class two older poets, Kipling and Yeats, and the younger poets known as the Georgians. The conservative poets, in the main, continue the ideals and methods of the Victorians, especially Swinburne and Tennyson. The radicals rebel against the ideals of the Victorians and seek new themes and experiment with new modes of expression.

Tennyson is the pet aversion of the radicals; and Tennyson, though a genuine poet and a great artist, had certain faults which his successors widely imitated. The result was that poetry became highly conventional in language, in ideas, and in technique. Professor Thorndike in a brilliant study of the Victorian period, *Literature in a Changing Age*, points out the conventional side of Tennyson's diction: "Flowers, moonlight, the lapping wave, jewels and silks, the open road, the wind in the trees, the flash of swords, the pale face and the deep eyes, the rose of dawn, the lone sea mew—whatever is pretty, melodious, picturesque, and rather superfluous in the day's work—furnish the thread of poetic embroidery for Tennyson, and for how many imitators!" Tennyson's followers, being unable to rival his original merits, imitated his faults: his over-ornate diction, his sentimentality, his artificial themes. The subjects of Swinburne, Morris, and Rossetti, for instance, are drawn oftener from books than from life; their poems presuppose more culture than the average reader possesses. Late Victorian poetry was out of touch with the life of the English people. The time was ripe for a new poetic move-

ment which should bring poetry back into touch with the common man. Before that could be done, however, it was necessary to abandon the outworn poetic diction and the dead stock ideas of the older poets.

Before we take leave of Tennyson, let us point out certain poems by living poets which furnish an excellent basis for a comparison between his work and theirs. In *The Daffodil Fields* Masefield has told a story which bears a striking resemblance to that of *Enoch Arden.* The plot of Amy Lowell's "Dried Marjoram" is very similar to that of Tennyson's "Rizpah." In *Merlin* and *Lancelot* Edwin Arlington Robinson has tempted comparison with *The Idylls of the King.* A study of these poems will give the reader an accurate conception of the great changes in poetic language and technique which have come about in the last two or three decades.

One discerns the first signs of an approaching change in poetic ideals and methods in Browning, whose versification, diction, and subject matter were more modern than those of any of his Victorian contemporaries. Rudyard Kipling, however, was the first to break completely with the waning Victorian tradition. He employed not the ornate diction of Swinburne, Rossetti, and Morris but the simple dialect of the British Tommy. In his *Barrack-room Ballads*, he wrote, not of Camelot, or Old Japan, or the Earthly Paradise, but of the life he knew at first hand in India. By adopting the simple language and rhythm of the ballad, he managed to write poetry which the average person, indifferent to Swinburne, could readily

understand and enjoy. The result was a great popular success. His poems were widely imitated by other writers, including Robert W. Service, the Canadian poet; Alfred Noyes; and John Masefield.

Some of the later poems of Kipling are much less popular than they deserve to be, for they possess a more substantial content of thought. The later poems show also a much greater range than the early poems. Kipling is one of the most versatile of living poets. In everything but name he is the laureate of the British Empire. He was the first of British writers in prose or verse to perceive the poetry latent in the Empire. With him for the first time Great Britain seems to have become conscious of her world-wide territory and her duties and opportunities. Lord Kitchener must have felt this when he put into the hands of every British soldier in France a copy of Kipling's "If."

Kipling, like most contemporary poets, finds his romance in the present rather than in the past. To most older poets, novelists, and dramatists, romance implied the far-off in space or time. Recent writers like Masefield and O. Henry follow Kipling in revealing the romantic side of familiar things. More than any other poet, Kipling has tried to point out the poetry and romance latent in modern machinery. "The King," which we quote, is a most effective satire upon the notion that only the past is romantic. This poem, like Kipling's "To the True Romance," "The Conundrum of the Workshops," "The Story of Ung," and "The Three-decker," is in addition to its poetic merits, valuable as criticism.

THE KING

"Farewell, Romance!" the Cave-men said;
"With bone well carved he went away.
Flint arms the ignoble arrowhead,
And jasper tips the spear to-day.
Changed are the Gods of Hunt and Dance,
And he with these. Farewell, Romance!"

"Farewell, Romance!" the Lake-fold sighed;
"We lift the weight of flatling years;
The caverns of the mountain-side
Hold him who scorns our hutted piers.
Lost hills whereby we dare not dwell,
Guard ye his rest. Romance, Farewell!"

"Farewell, Romance!" the Soldier spoke;
"By slight of sword we may not win,
But scuffle 'mid uncleanly smoke
Of arquebus and culverin.
Honour is lost, and none may tell
Who paid good blows. Romance, farewell!"

"Farewell, Romance!" the Traders cried;
"Our keels have lain with every sea;
The dull-returning wind and tide
Heave up the wharf where we would be;
The known and noted breezes swell
Our trudging sail. Romance, farewell!"

"Good-bye, Romance!" the Skipper said;
"He vanished with the coal we burn;
Our dial marks full steam ahead,
Our speed is timed to half a turn.
Sure as the ferried barge we ply
'Twixt port and port. Romance, good-bye!"

"Romance!" the season-tickets mourn,
"*He* never ran to catch his train,
But passed with coach and guard and horn—
And left the local—late again!"
Confound Romance! . . . And all unseen
Romance brought up the nine-fifteen.

His hand was on the lever laid,
His oil-can soothed the worrying cranks,
His whistle waked the snowbound grade,
His fog-horn cut the reeking Banks;
By dock and deep and mine and mill
The Boy-god reckless laboured still!

Robed, crowned and throned, he wove his spell,
Where heart-blood beat or hearth-smoke curled,
With unconsidered miracle,
Hedged in a backward-gazing world:
Then taught his chosen bard to say:
"Our King was with us—yesterday!"

Rudyard Kipling (*1865-*)

The leader of the Irish literary movement, William Butler Yeats, though he has little else in common with Kipling, shows an equal aversion to the conventional language of Tennyson's imitators. Speaking in Chicago several years ago, he said: "We tried to strip away everything that was artificial, to get a style like speech, as simple as the simplest prose, like a cry of the heart." Some of Yeats's poems, like his ballad, "Father Gilligan," possess this Wordsworthian simplicity; but many of them are tinged with a vague mysticism.

Yeats is the greatest poet Ireland has yet produced; if we may accept Masefield's estimate, he is also the great-

est living poet. "Unhappy Ireland," says Mary C. Sturgeon in her *Studies of Contemporary Poets*, "is at least happy in her laureate. The poet of dreams, of patriotism and proud humility, of old legend and song, of sweet sorrow and bitter joy, of a land and a people beyond the world—this is indeed the poet of Ireland; and it does not matter if no hand has ever set the wreath upon his brow." Yeats has discovered and developed most of the members of the Irish group, which includes Lord Dunsany, "Æ" (George William Russell), Francis Ledwidge, who was killed in France, and the most brilliant of the Irish dramatists, the late John Millington Synge. There is a poetic strain even in those Irish writers who, like Dunsany and Synge, write mainly in prose. Earlier Irish authors, like Swift, Steele, Goldsmith, Burke, Sheridan, and Moore, were essentially English. Yeats and his fellow-writers have added a new field to British literature in Irish legend and Irish life. "When You Are Old" is a superb and entirely Yeatsian adaptation of a sixteenth-century French poem, one of Ronsard's sonnets to Helen. The original has evoked many English versions, including one by Thackeray.

WHEN YOU ARE OLD

When you are old and gray and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true;
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face.

And bending down beside the glowing bars
Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

William Butler Yeats (1865-)

Although hardly a typical conservative, Alfred Noyes in the main impresses one as a belated Victorian. He is much more interested in England's past than any of his fellow-poets. His versification, his diction, his subjects often recall Swinburne, Tennyson, or Keats. Too often also he seems to be trying to express something which has already been effectively said by some older poet. In his political and social as well as in his poetic ideals, he is with the majority of his generation. He has, like Tennyson and Longfellow, the faculty of saying in not too literary a manner what the average reader of poetry is thinking; hence he has been enormously popular. His popularity with the masses, as in the case of Longfellow, has caused some critics to deny him any poetic merit. This is manifestly unfair. A man may be a genuine poet in spite of the fact that he is not a startlingly original thinker. Noyes's poetry, however, does to a considerable degree reflect modern English life and thought. Perhaps the fact that his wife is an American accounts in part for his interest in this country and in what he would call the Anglo-American "mission."

Noyes's technical skill, possibly his chief claim to fame, is little short of marvelous. He is equally at home in the ballad stanza, the sonnet, blank verse, and in the various lyric forms. His best poems are, by general consent, his ballads, among which "The Highwayman" and "Forty

Singing Seamen" are probably the best. His collected poems contain many other excellent narratives, the best of which perhaps are the *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern* and *Drake*, a romance of Elizabethan England.

John Masefield's early life taught him many things which poets who, like Noyes, Tennyson, and Wordsworth, go to Oxford or Cambridge, seldom have an opportunity to learn. At an early age he ran away and went to sea. As a result of his experience as a sailor, he is better able to picture the sea than any other writer except such novelists as Conrad, Melville, and Cooper, all of whom learned the sailor's life from actual experience. Masefield had many other unusual experiences before he began his career as poet. Once for a living he was forced to work as assistant in a New York barroom; his experience there has occasioned an interesting sonnet by William Rose Benét. Unlike most poets, Masefield has seen life from below as well as from above; and in his poems he has described the life of the lowly which until comparatively recent times got into literature none too often. *Salt Water Poems and Ballads*, somewhat in the vein of Kipling, was his first volume; but it was *The Everlasting Mercy* and *The Widow in the Bye Street* which brought him recognition. These two narratives are full of vivid pictures of the hard life of the poor; they fill the reader with a sense of the injustice of the social order which condemns certain individuals to a life of toil and suffering.

Like most poets, Masefield owes his awakening to a poet whom he read at a critical time. Milton seems to have been first stimulated to write poetry by a reading of Spenser, "the poet's poet." It was Spenser also who

awakened Keats; and it was Keats who seems to have been the inspiration of Amy Lowell. We quote Masefield's own account of his first reading of Chaucer, who gave him his first conception of what poetry might mean to him: "I did not begin to read poetry with passion and system until 1896. I was living then in Yonkers, N. Y. (at 8 Maple Street), Chaucer was the poet, and the *Parliament of Fowls* the poem, of my conversion. I read the *Parliament* all through one Sunday afternoon, with the feeling that I had been kept out of my inheritance and had then suddenly entered upon it, and had found it a new world of wonder and delight. I had never realized, until then, what poetry could be."

Although the influence of Shakespeare, Kipling, and other poets is to be seen in his work, the influence of Chaucer is the strongest to be found there. His later poems are less full of a rather lurid realism than *The Everlasting Mercy.* Masefield is perhaps no longer to be classed with the radical poets; certainly no tag describes his later verse, which is in harmony with the best traditions of English poetry. His subject matter and his diction are new, but the metrical forms which he employs are in the main the older forms used by Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Scott. Though he has written some excellent lyrics and many good Shakespearean sonnets, his best poems are probably his narrative poems, *Dauber*, *The Widow in the Bye Street*, *Reynard the Fox*, *Enslaved*, and *Right Royal.* The poem which we quote, although more characteristic of the earlier Masefield, furnishes an excellent illustration of the difference in spirit and subject between the new and the older poets. This poem is pre-

fixed to Masefield's *Collected Poems* as indicating his poetic aims.

A CONSECRATION

Not of the princes and prelates with periwigged charioteers
Riding triumphantly laurelled to lap the fat of the years,—
Rather the scorned—the rejected—the men hemmed in with the spears;

The men of the tattered battalion which fights till it dies,
Dazed with the dust of the battle, the din and the cries,
The men with the broken heads and the blood running into their eyes.

Not the be-medalled Commander, beloved of the throne,
Riding cock-horse to parade when the bugles are blown,
But the lads who carried the koppie and cannot be known.

Not the ruler for me, but the ranker, the tramp of the road,
The slave with the sack on his shoulders pricked on with the goad,
The man with too weighty a burden, too weary a load.

The sailor, the stoker of steamers, the man with the clout,
The chantyman bent at the halliards putting a tune to the shout,
The drowsy man at the wheel and the tired lookout.

Others may sing of the wine and the wealth and mirth,
The portly presence of potentates goodly in girth;—
Mine be the dirt and the dross, the dust and scum of the earth!

Theirs be the music, the colour, the glory, the gold;
Mine be a handful of ashes, a mouthful of mould.

Of the maimed, of the halt and the blind in the rain and the cold—
Of these shall my songs be fashioned, my tales be told. Amen.

John Masefield (1878-)

In the following poem Wilfrid Wilson Gibson suggests the change in his own poetic ideals which corresponds in general to that we note in passing from the Victorian poets to those of the present time.

PRELUDE

As one, at midnight, wakened by the call
Of golden-plovers in their seaward flight,
Who lies and listens, as the clear notes fall
Through tingling silence of the frosty night—
Who lies and listens, till the last note fails,
And then, in fancy, faring with the flock
Far over slumbering hills and dreaming dales,
Soon hears the surges break on reef and rock;
And, hearkening, till all sense of self is drowned
Within the mightier music of the deep,
No more remembers the sweet piping sound
That startled him from dull, undreaming sleep;
So I, first waking from oblivion, heard,
With heart that kindled to the call of song,
The voice of young life, fluting like a bird,
And echoed that light lilting; till, ere long,
Lured onward by that happy singing-flight,
I caught the stormy summons of the sea,
And dared the restless deeps that, day and night,
Surge with the life-song of humanity.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson (1878-)

In America the break with the older poetic tradition is more marked than in England; we have few living poets who can be classed as conservative. The only older American poets who exert any appreciable influence on contemporary poetry are Poe and Whitman, neither of whom was a New Englander. Contemporary American poets endorse Poe's oft-affirmed conviction that the business of poetry is not morality but beauty. Whitman's influence, as we have already suggested, is much greater. In his use of free verse, in his American themes, and in his hatred of conventional poetic diction Whitman was clearly a forerunner of the new poets. Whitman's "Poets to to Come" seems almost prophetic:

Poets to come! orators, singers, musicians to come!
Not to-day is to justify me and answer what I am for,
But you, a new brood, native, athletic, continental, greater than before known,
Arouse! for you must justify me.

Poets and critics of today, even those who were born in New England, have little sympathy with the older poets of that section. The poems of Longfellow, Holmes, Whittier, and Lowell, we are reminded, were often vitiated by their provincialism, their prudish reticence, their incessant moralizing. Even the conservative Edmund Clarence Stedman, after compiling his *American Anthology*, said to a friend that what this country needed was some "adult male verse." Louis Untermeyer, a contemporary poet and critic, refers to the work of the older New England poets as "poems of the insistently didactic type, —where all things in and out of nature, from a cham-

bered nautilus to a village blacksmith, are used to point a specious and usually irrelevant moral." A contemporary American poet has cleverly expressed the attitude of his fellows in a Shakespearean sonnet.

CERTAIN AMERICAN POETS

They cowered inert before the study fire
While mighty winds were ranging wide and free,
Urging their torpid fancies to aspire
With "Euhoe! Bacchus! Have a cup of tea."

They tripped demure from church to lecture-hall,
Shunning the snare of farthingales and curls,
Woman they thought half angel and half doll,
The Muses' temple a boarding-school for girls.

Quaffing Pierian draughts from Boston pump,
They toiled to prove their homiletic art
Could match with nasal twang and pulpit thump
In maxims glib of meeting-house and mart.

Serenely their ovine admirers graze.
Apollo wears frock-coats, the Muses stays.

Odell Shepard (1884-)

It is true that Longfellow thought it "exquisite to read good novels in bed with wax lights in silver candlesticks." It is true also that after reading Frémont's account of a journey through the Rockies, he wrote in his journal: "What a wild life, and what a fresh kind of existence! But ah, the discomforts!" And yet the sonnet we have quoted is not wholly just even to Longfellow, the pet aversion of the American poets of today. It is a char-

acteristic of every new movement in literature that it begins by rebelling against the traditions set by its predecessors. Hence we do not look to poets for sound literary criticism. Doubtless Longfellow, Lowell, Holmes, and Whittier have been considerably overrated and, worse still, praised for their poorest work; but the poets of today will have to face the same process of re-valuation in the next generation. That there is still life in the older poetic tradition is the opinion of Richard Le Gallienne, an English poet now living in this country.

THE ETERNAL WAY

I take no shame that still I sing the rose
And the young moon, and Helen's face and spring;
And strive to fill my song with sound of streams
And light of dreams;
Choosing some beautiful eternal thing,
That ever comes like April—and ever goes.
I have no envy of those dusty themes
Born of the sweat and clamor of the hour—
Dust unto dust returning—nor any shame have I,
'Mid sack of towns, to ponder on a flower:
For still the sorrow of Troy-town is mine,
And the great Hector scarce is dead an hour.

All heroes, and all lovers, that came to die
Make pity's eyes with grief immortal shine;
Yea! still my cheeks are wet
For little Juliet,
And many a broken-hearted lover's tale,
Told by the nightingale.
Nor have I shame to strive the ancient way,
With rime that runs to meet its sister rime,

Or in some meter that hath learnt from Time
The heart's own chime.
These ways are not more old
Than the unmeditated modern lay,
And all those little heresies of song
Already old when Homer still was young.

Richard Le Gallienne (1866-)

The aims of the radical poets, both British and American, have been best expressed by the group known as the Imagists. The best known members of this varying group are Richard Aldington, D. H. Lawrence, and T. S. Flint, all Englishmen; and three Americans, "H. D." (Mrs. Richard Aldington, *née* Hilda Doolittle), John Gould Fletcher, and Amy Lowell. In 1915 they prefixed to a collection of their work, *Some Imagist Poems*, six rules for the writing of poetry. We quote in part the first four:

1. To use the language of common speech, but to employ always the *exact* word, not the nearly exact, nor the merely decorative word.

2. To create new rhythms—as the expressions of new moods—and not to copy old rhythms, which merely echo old moods. We do not insist upon "free verse" as the only method of writing poetry. We fight for it as a principle of liberty. We believe that the individuality of the poet may often be better expressed in free verse than in conventional forms. In poetry, a new cadence means a new idea.

3. To allow absolute freedom in the choice of subject. . . . We believe passionately in the artistic value of modern life. . . .

4. To present an image (hence the name "Imagist"). We are not a school of painters, but we believe that poetry should

render particulars exactly and not deal in vague generalities, however magnificent and sonorous. . . .

As the Imagists themselves state, these principles are not new but fallen into disuse. Had they wished to appeal to the history of poetry for precedent, they could have found a striking example of these Imagist principles in the Preface which Wordsworth prefixed to the 1800 edition of *The Lyrical Ballads*. Wordsworth argued for freer choice of subject, for writing with one's eye on the object described, and for the abandonment of a conventional poetic diction in favor of a language drawn from the living speech of the people. The Imagists, in their desire to get away from conventions, like Wordsworth, lay down rules which it is impossible always to live up to. Like him, they find it difficult to limit themselves to "the language of common speech"; and sometimes, like him, they fall into the hackneyed diction and the "inversions" which they condemn. But the new poets have pretty effectively freed poetry of such trite expressions as *O thou*, *'mongst*, *doth*, *e'en*, *erst*, and *whilom*.

The following poem by "H. D." is typical of Imagist poetry except that it is more compact and highly finished than most other compositions in free verse. An oread is a mountain nymph.

OREAD

Whirl up, sea—
Whirl your pointed pines.
Splash your great pines
On our rocks.

Hurl your green over us—
Cover us with your pools of fir.
"H. D." (*1886-*)

In discussing the Imagists we have departed from the order of chronology. Edwin Arlington Robinson is the pioneer of living American poets and the greatest of them all. He is, in our opinion, a more painstaking artist than any other living poet. Although he has been writing and publishing poems for twenty-five years, not until six or seven years ago did he really begin to get a hearing. He is even now much less widely known than he deserves to be; for his poems, like Browning's, are not easy to read. His best poems are narrative. "Ben Jonson Entertains a Man from Stratford" is not only one of the finest dramatic monologues ever written; it is also the best characterization of Shakespeare ever written in verse.

The great majority of recent poems do not come up to the level of the classics that we all know. Now and then, however, we come across a new poem like "The Dark Hills" so perfect in conception and phrasing that one recalls Holmes's comment upon a passage in Emerson's "Voluntaries," "These lines, a moment after they were written, seemed as if they had been carved on marble for a thousand years." Could anything be more nearly perfect than the two poems which are given below?

THE DARK HILLS

Dark hills at evening in the west,
Where sunset hovers like a sound
Of golden horns that sang to rest

Old bones of warriors under ground,
Far now from all the bannered ways
Where flash the legions of the sun,
You fade—as if the last of days
Were fading, and all wars were done.

Edwin Arlington Robinson (*1869-*)

MONADNOCK THROUGH THE TREES

Before there was in Egypt any sound
Of those who reared a more prodigious means
For the self-heavy sleep of kings and queens
Than hitherto had mocked the most renowned,—
Unvisioned here and waiting to be found,
Alone, amid remote and older scenes,
You loomed above ancestral evergreens
Before there were the first of us around.

And when the last of us, if we know how,
See farther from ourselves than we do now,
Assured with other sights than heretofore
That we have done our mortal best and worst,—
Your calm will be the same as when the first
Assyrians went howling south to war.

Edwin Arlington Robinson (*1869-*)

Although Robinson and Amy Lowell are also New England poets, Robert Frost, born in San Francisco, is the distinctive poet of contemporary New England. Two of Frost's poems, "Mending Wall" and "The Tuft of Flowers," are quoted in Chapter V, to which the reader is referred for further discussion of Frost's poetry.

The Illinois poets, Vachel Lindsay, Edgar Lee Masters, and Carl Sandburg, are, as we should expect from their

Western origin, more given to innovation than the Eastern poets. Vachel Lindsay is a sort of Puritan troubadour; and his poems are, in Louis Untermeyer's phrase, a curious "mixture of rhymes, rag-time, and religion." Lindsay has described his own poetry as "the Higher Vaudeville." He wishes to bring poetry back to the people, to make it a matter of supreme importance to every American. He once tramped over a large part of the United States preaching the Gospel of Beauty, obtaining his food and lodging by exchanging his *Rhymes to be Traded for Bread.* Poetry, he maintains, is an oral art, meant for the ear and not for the eye. Hence he recites his poems in dramatic fashion, and in his published verse often supplies printed directions as to how it should be read. Among the best of his longer poems we may mention "On the Building of Springfield" and "Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight," already quoted, "The Congo," "The Chinese Nightingale," and "General William Booth Enters into Heaven." The short poem which we quote below recalls Swinburne, whom Lindsay greatly admires. Its subject, John P. Altgeld, was prominent in Middle Western politics a generation ago.

THE EAGLE THAT IS FORGOTTEN

Sleep softly . . . eagle forgotten . . . under the stone.
Time has its way with you there, and the clay has its own.

"We have buried him now," thought your foes, and in secret rejoiced.
They made a brave show of their mourning, their hatred unvoiced.

They had snarled at you, barked at you, foamed at you day after day;
Now you were ended. They praised you . . . and laid you away.

The others that mourned you in silence and terror and truth,
The widow bereft of her crust, and the boy without youth,
The mocked and the scorned and the wounded, the lame and the poor,
That should have remembered forever . . . remember no more.

Where are those lovers of yours, on what name do they call—
The lost, that in armies wept over your funeral pall?
They call on the names of a hundred high-valiant ones;
A hundred white eagles have risen, the sons of your sons.
The zeal in their wings is a zeal that your dreaming began,
The valor that wore out your soul in the service of man.

Sleep softly . . . eagle forgotten . . . under the stone.
Time has its way with you there and the clay has its own.
Sleep on, O brave-hearted, O wise man, that kindled the flame—
To live in mankind is far more than to live in a name;
To live in mankind, far, far more . . . than to live in a name.

Vachel Lindsay (1879-)

Edgar Lee Masters has published several volumes of verse, but he is known for one book, the *Spoon River Anthology*. This volume is in reality a collection of short stories, which twenty years ago would probably have been written in prose. It is perhaps significant that Masters has published a novel, *Mitch Miller*. More recently, however, he has returned to poetry in *Domesday Book*, a long

narrative in blank verse which has been compared to Browning's *Ring and the Book*.

Masters himself has admitted that the title and the original idea of his *Spoon River Anthology* were derived from the Greek Anthology, a collection of short poems by many authors. Like Chaucer's *Prologue* and the *Divine Comedy* of Dante, the *Spoon River Anthology* is a collection of portraits,—many of them such as one finds in a rogues' gallery. The plan of the book is unique. The poet goes to the cemetery in the decaying village of Spoon River and summons the spirits of the dead to come forth and tell the stories of their lives. In the ordinary acceptation of the term, these miniature autobiographies are not often poetical, but they are vivid and powerful. Possibly Masters's profession—he is a criminal lawyer in Chicago—accounts in part for the pessimism and cynicism of many of the sketches. The best known poem in the collection, "Anne Rutledge," we are unable to quote. The two selections which we give seem fairly representative.

GEORGE GRAY

I have studied many times
The marble which was chiseled for me—
A boat with a furled sail at rest in a harbor.
In truth it pictures not my destination
But my life.
For love was offered me and I shrank from its disillusionment;
Sorrow knocked at my door, but I was afraid;
Ambition called to me, but I dreaded the chances.

Yet all the while I hungered for meaning in my life.
And now I know that we must lift the sail
And catch the winds of destiny
Wherever they drive the boat.
To put meaning in one's life may end in madness,
But life without meaning is the torture
Of restlessness and vague desire—
It is a boat longing for the sea and yet afraid.

Edgar Lee Masters (1869-)

JOHN HANCOCK OTIS

As to democracy, fellow citizens,
Are you not prepared to admit
That I, who inherited riches and was to the manner born,
Was second to none in Spoon River
In my devotion to the cause of Liberty?
While my contemporary, Anthony Findlay,
Born in a shanty and beginning life
As a water carrier to the section hands,
Then becoming a section hand when he was grown,
Afterwards foreman of the gang, until he rose
To the superintendency of the railroad,
Living in Chicago,
Was a veritable slave driver,
Grinding the faces of labor,
And a bitter enemy of democracy.
And I say to you, Spoon River,
And to you, O republic,
Beware of the man who rises to power
From one suspender.

Edgar Lee Masters (1869-)

Carl Sandburg, the only contemporary poet of first importance who limits himself to free verse, is of Swedish descent, and is by profession a Chicago journalist. Like

Masefield and Masters, he has been charged with "brutality"; but if his poems lack polish and good taste, they have great power. Synge, the Irish dramatist, was of the opinion that before poetry could be made human again, it would have to learn to be brutal. Sandburg is perhaps too much of a propagandist to be a consistent artist; but his poems are full of a hatred of injustice and are filled with sympathy for poverty and suffering. More than any other poet of our time, he has endeavored to write the poetry of life in large cities. His best known poem, "Chicago," has been quoted in the preceding chapter.

Although we have not space enough to discuss other living poets in detail, we must at least mention by name other American poets of importance, such as Sara Teasdale (Mrs. Filsinger), Edna St. Vincent Millay, John Hall Wheelock, James Oppenheim, Edwin Markham, Josephine Preston Peabody (Mrs. Lionel Marks), Anna Hempstead Branch, Adelaide Crapsey, Witter Bynner, Ezra Pound, Louis Untermeyer, William Rose Benét, Stephen Vincent Benét, Christopher Morley, Arthur Guiterman, Conrad Aiken, Cale Young Rice, Lola Ridge, Arthur Davison Ficke, and Percy Mackaye. Many other names will be found in any good anthology of contemporary verse.

It should be noted that the production of poetry in the English language is no longer confined to England and the United States. We can no longer ignore the work of poets in the British colonies. John McCrae (1872–1918), the author of "In Flanders Fields," and Eliot Napier, whose "All Men are Free" has been quoted, belong, respectively,

to Canada and Australasia. A better known poet, Rabindranath Tagore, comes from India. A few years ago Tagore's poetry was enormously popular among those superficial readers who are always looking for some new sensation; but the comparative unpopularity into which his work has fallen since the war should not cause us to overlook his real importance. In the original Bengali, Tagore's poems possess both meter and rime; in their English form, as translated by Tagore himself, they are perhaps best classed as free verse. Since poems in which verbal melody or the subtle associations of words form the dominant interest are most difficult to translate, we have selected for quotation from Tagore's *Gitanjali* (Song Offerings) a poem in which the thought is the major element. We have entitled it

A PRAYER FOR INDIA

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;
Where words come out from the depths of truth;
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action—
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-)

The differences between contemporary and older poets are clearly seen in their use of war as poetic material.

As in their treatment of other themes, the new poets have not re-echoed many of the conventional notes of older poetry. It seems worth while to develop this point in some detail in a discussion of the poetry occasioned by the World War.

The most striking thing about recent war poetry is that much of it has been written by the soldiers themselves. Not being either professional soldiers or professional patriotic poets, they have described war as they saw it with their own eyes—a horrible thing, defensible only as a means to a great end. Modern war poetry, accordingly, is not romantic but realistic.

In primitive times the chief business of the bard was to celebrate the warlike deeds of his lord and to incite the warriors to fight. The poet's praise was fame. Of those chieftains who died "unwept, unhonored, and unsung," Pope says,

> Vain was the chief's, the sage's pride!
> They had no poet, and they died.

In later days war poetry took often the form of a narrow jingoistic patriotism. Like Stephen Decatur, the poet felt bound to sanction the stand of his country, right or wrong. A striking instance of this is found in Shakespeare's *Henry V.* King Henry's war of aggression against the French had as little justification as Germany's attack upon Belgium; and the King's speech to the inhabitants of Harfleur, in the third scene of the third act, is morally almost as infamous as the German ultimatum to the Belgian government. It is unfair, however, to expect even a great poet to be in all respects

ahead of his age. It is something to be grateful for that while Germany was chanting her "Hymn of Hate," England and America had to a great extent outgrown this primitive form of patriotism.

"Peace hath her victories no less renowned than War," wrote Milton; but peace has never appealed to the imagination of the poet as war has done. Possibly the true explanation of this has been given in William James's brilliant essay, "The Moral Equivalent of War." "Our ancestors," he says, "have bred pugnacity into our bone and marrow, and thousands of years of peace won't breed it out of us." That perhaps is why the sights and sounds of military life have so great a fascination for us all. We cannot resist

> the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,
> The spirit-stirring drum, and the ear-piercing fife,
> The royal banner, and all the quality,
> Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war,

to which Othello sadly bade farewell. The characteristic attitude of older war poets is superbly expressed in a famous quatrain formerly ascribed to Scott, but recently discovered to have been written by a certain Major Mordaunt:

> Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife!
> To all the sensual world proclaim:
> One crowded hour of glorious life
> Is worth an age without a name.

Yet we do not mean to leave the reader under the impression that all the wars in the past have been unjust

or that the poets have invariably glorified the worse cause. War inspires in us the best as well as the worst. Many of the poems occasioned by the American Revolution, the Civil War, and the Napoleonic wars are thoroughly modern in spirit. "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," "The Burial of Sir John Moore," the "Concord Hymn," and Coleridge's "France" require no apology.

The new feeling about war and the poetry of war is the outgrowth of democracy and internationalism. Something of the modern feeling is to be found even in Kipling, the laureate of the British Empire. In 1897 England celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of Victoria's accession to the throne. In the sixty years of her reign the Empire had grown enormously in size and in power. Kipling, feeling that there was too strong a disposition to boast about the greatness of the Empire, wrote his "Recessional" as a warning against the Prussian kind of imperialism. In the Anglican church service the hymn sung by the retiring choir is called the recessional. The poem has been admirably set to music by Harry Rowe Shelley.

RECESSIONAL

God of our fathers, known of old—
  Lord of our far-flung battle line—
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
  Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies—
  The Captains and the Kings depart—

Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

Far-called, our navies melt away—
On dune and headland sinks the fire—
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe—
Such boasting as the Gentiles use,
Or lesser breeds without the Law—
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard—
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding calls not Thee to guard,—
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy mercy on Thy People, Lord! AMEN.

Rudyard Kipling (1865-)

When we examine the poetry inspired by the War with Germany, we find that the first poems were written by poets of established reputation like Masefield and Kipling. These poems were written from the civilian standpoint. Vachel Lindsay's "Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight," quoted in the preceding chapter, well describes the usual American reaction to the outbreak of the war in 1914. The best expression of English feeling at the outset is

found in what is still the greatest poem of the war, Masefield's "August, 1914."

The feeling of the volunteer who has given up home, relatives, friends, and career to die for his country is well expressed in Rupert Brooke's five sonnets, "Nineteen-Fourteen," the last of which is quoted in the chapter on the Sonnet. Somewhat the same mood is expressed in McCrae's "In Flanders Fields" (see Chapter VII) and in Alan Seeger's "I Have a Rendezvous with Death." Both these poems were written by poets who were unknown before the war. Seeger was a young Harvard graduate who enlisted in the French army and was killed in France in 1916, nearly a year before America entered the war.

I HAVE A RENDEZVOUS WITH DEATH

I have a rendezvous with Death
At some disputed barricade,
When Spring comes back with rustling shade
And apple-blossoms fill the air—
I have a rendezvous with Death
When Spring brings back blue days and fair.

It may be he shall take my hand
And lead me into his dark land
And close my eyes and quench my breath—
It may be I shall pass him still.
I have a rendezvous with Death
On some scarred slope of battered hill,
When Spring comes round again this year
And the first meadow-flowers appear.

God knows 'twere better to be deep
Pillowed in silk and scented down,

Where love throbs out in blissful sleep,
Pulse nigh to pulse, and breath to breath,
Where hushed awakenings are dear. . . .
But I've a rendezvous with Death
At midnight in some flaming town,
When Spring trips north again this year,
And I to my pledged word am true,
I shall not fail that rendezvous.

Alan Seeger (1888-1916)

The War with Germany proved at once a great stimulus to the production of poetry and a great interruption to its composition. It called forth some splendid poems from well-known poets like Noyes, Masters, and Masefield; it brought to our attention some new poets like Alan Seeger, John McCrae, and Siegfried Sassoon. It also practically put an end, for four years, to the poetic career of Masefield. The war cost us the lives of several promising young poets who died in the service, Rupert Brooke, Julian Grenfell, Alan Seeger, Joyce Kilmer, and Francis Ledwidge. After the death of the Irish peasant poet, Francis Ledwidge, Lord Dunsany wrote, "He has gone down in that vast maelstrom into which poets do well to adventure and from which their country might perhaps be wise to withhold them." Ledwidge shared Dunsany's opinion in part, for shortly before his death he wrote:

It is too late now to retrieve
A fallen dream, too late to grieve
A name unmade, but not too late
To thank the gods for what is great;

A keen-edged sword, a soldier's heart,
Is greater than a poet's art.
And greater than a poet's fame
A little grave that has no name.

Probably the best elegiac poem of the war has been written by Laurence Binyon.

FOR THE FALLEN

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,
England mourns for her dead across the sea.
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill: Death august and royal
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres.
There is music in the midst of desolation
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were stanch to the end against odds uncounted,
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;
They have no lot in our labor of the daytime;
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known
As the stars are known to the Night;

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain;
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.

Laurence Binyon (*1869-*)

To most of the poets who saw active service, the war eventually became a matter of routine, a prosaic business, horrible when not dull. Some of them, notably Siegfried Sassoon and Robert Graves, have undertaken to strip off the traditional romantic halo of war and paint the fighting trade as it really is. Certain other realistic poets like Gibson and Sandburg, who apparently saw none of the fighting, picture war in the same manner. Sassoon, who is perhaps the ablest poet whose reputation has been made by the war, has said: "Let no one ever from henceforth say a word in any way countenancing war. . . . For war is hell and those who institute it are criminals. Were there anything to say for it, it should not be said for its spiritual disasters far outweigh any of its advantages." Many of Sassoon's poems are full of the gruesome details which most of us try to forget. The fact that every other generation which has experienced the horrors of war has also tried to forget them probably explains why the second and third generations imagine war as something romantic and holy. This point is brought out in the following poem.

SONG-BOOKS OF THE WAR *

In fifty years, when peace outshines
Remembrance of the battle lines,
Adventurous lads will sigh and cast
Proud looks upon the plundered past.
On summer morn or winter's night,
Their hearts will kindle for the fight,
Reading a snatch of soldier-song,
Savage and jaunty, fierce and strong;
And through the angry marching rhymes
Of blind regret and haggard mirth,
They'll envy us the dazzling times
When sacrifice absolved our earth.

Some ancient man with silver locks
Will lift his weary face to say:
"War was a fiend who stopped our clocks
Although we met him grim and gay."
And then he'll speak of Haig's last drive,
Marvelling that any came alive
Out of the shambles that men built
And smashed, to cleanse the world of guilt.
But the boys, with grin and sidelong glance,
Will think, "Poor grandad's day is done,"
And dream of those who fought in France
And lived in time to see the fun.

Siegfried Sassoon (1886-)

The war on the sea has been best described by Alfred Noyes. The following poem suggests the story of a trawler which has just come into port from a fight with a German submarine.

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KILMENY

Dark, dark lay the drifters against the red West,
As they shot their long meshes of steel overside;
And the oily green waters were rocking to rest
When Kilmeny went out, at the turn of the tide;
And nobody knew where that lassie would roam,
For the magic that called her was tapping unseen.
It was well-nigh a week ere Kilmeny came home,
And nobody knew where Kilmeny had been.

She'd a gun at her bow that was Newcastle's best,
And a gun at her stern that was fresh from the Clyde,
And a secret her skipper had never confessed,
Not even at dawn, to his newly-wed bride;
And a wireless that whispered above, like a gnome,
The laughter of London, the boasts of Berlin. . . .
O, it may have been mermaids that lured her from home;
But nobody knew where Kilmeny had been.

It was dark when Kilmeny came home from her quest
With her bridge dabbled red where her skipper had died;
But she moved like a bride with a rose at her breast,
And *Well done Kilmeny!* the Admiral cried.
Now, at sixty-four fathom a conger may come
And nose at the bones of a drowned submarine;
But—late in the evening Kilmeny came home,
And nobody knew where Kilmeny had been.

There's a wandering shadow that stares at the foam,
Though they sing all the night to old England, their queen.
Late, late in the evening, Kilmeny came home;
And nobody knew where Kilmeny had been.

Alfred Noyes (1880-)

Perhaps the most notable poem occasioned by the close of the World War is Sandburg's "A. E. F." It is hardly necessary to note that poets are not historians. The soldiers of the recent war were not allowed to keep their rifles as the soldiers of the Civil War seem to have done. Does not the effect obtained prove that this violation of historical fact is justified?

A. E. F.

There will be a rusty gun on the wall, sweetheart,
The rifle grooves curling with flakes of rust.
A spider will make a silver string in the darkest, warmest corner of it.
The trigger and the range-finder, they too will be rusty.
And no hands will polish the gun, and it will hang on the wall.
Forefingers and thumbs will point absently and casually toward it.
It will be spoken of among half-forgotten, wished-to-be-forgotten things.
They will tell the spider: Go on, you're doing good work.

Carl Sandburg (1878-)

What shall we say, in conclusion, of the relative merits of contemporary poetry when compared with that of earlier periods? In making any such comparison, one should bear several things in mind. First, it is unfair to set off the work of a dozen living poets against the numerous poems written by scores of poets in various periods which cover many centuries. It would be fairer to compare the British poets of today with the Romantic poets of a century ago, or the living American poets with the New England poets of the last century. Yet even

then one must remember two things: first, that many of our living poets probably still have their best years ahead of them and, second, that the great output of contemporary verse is as yet unwinnowed by the hand of time. This is not the case with the poets of the Romantic Movement. Here we know at once who the great poets are: Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, Byron, Shelley, and Keats. In the case of Wordsworth, for instance, we know that only about a fourth of what he wrote is worth reading today. Although he died at the age of eighty, practically all his best poems were composed in one decade, 1797-1807. In the case of a minor Romantic poet like Thomas Campbell, only three poems can be said to have lived: "Hohenlinden," "Ye Mariners of England," and "The Battle of the Baltic." No one now reads his long poems, *The Pleasures of Hope* and *Gertrude of Wyoming*. For Frost, Robinson, and Masefield, the sifting is yet to be done. Such anthologies as ours attempt it only tentatively and with trepidation. It is idle to say that all the poems of these poets are immortal; but who shall say just which of their poems will not be remembered?

The criticism of contemporary poetry is notoriously unreliable. Much of it is ignorant or partisan; much of it is mere advertising. One should be careful not to accept without question the estimates put upon the living poets by their publishers or their friends. Lord Byron attempted to forestall posterity's estimate of his fellow-poets. At the head of his list he placed Crabbe and Rogers, both almost forgotten; in the middle, Moore and Campbell; at the end, Wordsworth and Coleridge. Byron

could hardly have made a poorer guess, for though posterity has accepted his list, it reads it backwards.

While we shall, therefore, not attempt to estimate the achievement of the poets of today, we do wish to point out two things which they have undoubtedly accomplished. In the first place, they have put into their poetry much of contemporary life and thought. Equally important is the fact that they have helped to bring about an enormous revival of interest in poetry. While in this country in 1918, John Masefield said: "America is making ready for the coming of a great poet. In England, in the days before Chaucer, many people were reading and writing verse. Then he came. The same intense interest in poetry was shown again just before the coming of Shakespeare. And now, in this country, you are all writing poems or enjoying them. You are making ready for a master. A great poetic revival is in progress."

NOTES

CHAPTER I. THE STUDY OF POETRY

The following are excellent discussions of poetry:—Hazlitt: "On Poetry in General"; Arnold: Introduction to Ward's *English Poets;* Poe's lecture, "The Poetic Principle"; Theodore Watts-Dunton's article on *Poetry* in the *Encyclopædia Britannica;* and Max Eastman's *The Enjoyment of Poetry.* See Bibliography for other titles.

The following references throw further light upon the process of poetic composition:—W. L. Cross: "The Act of Composition," *Atlantic Monthly,* May, 1906; Lane Cooper: *Methods and Aims in the Study of Literature,* Section IV; Conrad Aiken: *Scepticisms,* Chapter II, "The Mechanism of Poetic Inspiration." Dorothy Canfield Fisher: "How 'Flint and Fire' Started," in Benjamin A. Heydrick: *Americans All,* is an exceptionally interesting account of the composition of a short story. Compare also Poe's account of the writing of "The Raven" in "The Philosophy of Composition."

CHAPTER II. THE SONG

For further discussion of the song, see Mrs. Wodehouse's article on the *Song* in Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians;* Alfred Hayes: "The Relation of Music to Poetry," *Atlantic Monthly,* January, 1914; Prof. Percy H. Boynton's chapter on "Patriotic Songs and Hymns" in Volume IV of the *Cambridge History of American Literature;* Brander Matthews: "The Songs of the Civil War," in *Pen and Ink;* John Erskine: *The Elizabethan Lyric,* Chapter I. There is an interesting account of Stephen Collins Foster in Henry

Watterson's autobiography, *Marse Henry.* For Elizabethan songs, see Robert Bell: *Songs from the Dramatists.* Gayley and Flaherty: *The Poetry of the People* contains a large number of English, Scottish, Irish, and American songs, with valuable notes. For negro folk-songs, see Thomas W. Talley: *Negro Folk Rhymes* and John A. Lomax: "Self-pity in Negro Folk-songs," *The Nation,* August 9, 1917.

The following songs and closely related poems are quoted in other chapters of this book:—Henley: "Invictus" (iii); Lovelace: "To Lucasta" (iii); Kingsley: "Young and Old" (iii); Goldsmith: "When Lovely Woman" (iii); Tennyson: "The Splendor Falls" (iii) and "Ring Out, Wild Bells" (iii); Kipling: "For All We Have and Are" (iii); Burns: "Bannockburn" (iii); Christina Rossetti: "When I Am Dead" (iii); Teasdale: "I Shall Not Care" (iii); Byron: "All for Love" (iv); Scott: "Coronach" (iv); Browning: Song from *Pippa Passes* (iv); Noyes: Song from *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern* (iv); Coleridge: "The Knight's Tomb" (iv); Yeats: "The Lake Isle of Innisfree" (iv); Masefield: "The West Wind" (iv); Herrick: "To the Virgins" (iv); Burns: "Highland Mary" (xi); Kipling: "Recessional" (xii).

For further reading, the following songs are suggested:—All of Shakespeare's songs and most of those by Burns; Marlowe: "The Passionate Shepherd to his Love"; Jonson: "Hymn to Diana" and "Still to be Neat"; Collins: "Dirge in 'Cymbeline'"; Thomson: "Rule Britannia"; Shelley: "Hymn of Pan," "The Indian Serenade," and the songs in *Hellas* and *Prometheus Unbound;* Emerson: "To Ellen"; Richard Henry Wilde: "My Life is Like a Summer Rose"; Richard Hovey: "Comrades" and "A Stein Song"; Eugene Field: "Wynken, Blynken, and Nod"; the songs in Sara Teasdale's *Rivers to the Sea* and other volumes.

The following hymns are worthy of study—Addison: "The Spacious Firmament on High"; Charles Wesley: "Jesus, Lover of my Soul"; Cowper: "God Moves in a Mysterious Way" and "There is a Fountain Filled with Blood"; Thomas Moore: "Come ye Disconsolate"; Reginald Heber: "The Son of God Goes Forth to War"; Holmes: "A Sun-Day Hymn"; Lyte: "Abide with Me"; Toplady: "Rock of Ages"; Bliss Carman: "Lord of the Heart's Elation."

CHAPTER III. THE DUPLE METERS

For fuller or different discussions of the duple meters, see the manuals listed in the Bibliography. Since the great majority of English poems are iambic, it is not necessary to make any particular suggestions for further reading of poems in the iambic meter. Note that all the poems contained in Chapters V and VII are iambic. Milton's "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," Arnold's "The Forsaken Merman," and John Hall Wheelock's "Earth" (ix) are interesting for their mingling of iambic and trochaic feet in varying proportions. The following poems in trochaic rhythm are suggested for further study:—Edna St. Vincent Millay: "Elegy" (xi); Keats: "Bards of Passion and of Mirth" and "Fancy"; Blake: "The Tiger"; Burns: "Ae Fond Kiss"; Shelley: "Music, When Soft Voices Die"; Campbell: "The Battle of the Baltic"; Browning: "One Word More"; Tennyson: "Locksley Hall" and "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After"; James Russell Lowell: "The Present Crisis"; Longfellow: *Hiawatha,* "Nuremberg," and "The Belfry of Bruges"; Poe: "The Raven"; Whitman: "Pioneers! O Pioneers!"; Robinson: "The Valley of the Shadow."

With reference to the named stanzas, some suggested readings are:

Ballad Stanza.—Emily Dickinson: "A Book" (i); "Sir Patrick Spens" (vi); Herrick: "To the Virgins" (ix); Hood: "Faithless Nelly Gray" (ix); Burns: "Highland Mary" (xi). See also Kipling: "Danny Deever" (vi).

Short, or Octosyllabic, Couplet.—Poe: "The Sleeper" (xi); Whittier: "Maud Muller"; Collins: "How Sleep the Brave"; Wordsworth: "To a Highland Girl"; Shelley: "Lines Written among the Euganean Hills"; Joyce Kilmer: "Trees" (ix); Butler: *Hudibras.*

William H. Davies: "Days Too Short" is in the "In Memoriam" stanza. Wordsworth: "At the Grave of Burns" and "Thoughts Suggested the Day Following" are appropriately cast in the Burns stanza. Most of the stanzas which bear names are, however, associated with iambic pentameter. See notes to Chapter V.

The hymn stanza, $4(4xa)$, is known as the long meter

stanza (L.M.) Similarly, the ballad stanza (C.M.), when shortened by the omission of one foot in the first line, is known as short meter (S.M.).

CHAPTER IV. THE TRIPLE METERS

For fuller discussion of the triple meters, see the manuals of versification listed in the Bibliography. The following additional poems, some of them quoted in other chapters, are suggested:—Burns: "Afton Water" (ii); Moore: "Believe Me, if All those Endearing Young Charms" (ii); Gilman: "Fair Harvard" (ii); Yeats: Song from *The Land of Heart's Desire* (ii); Key: "The Star-spangled Banner" (ii); "Lord Randal"; Scott: "Lochinvar" (vi); Harte: "Her Letter" (ix); Untermeyer: "Questioning Lydia" (ix); Whittier: "Telling the Bees" (xi); Browning: "Up at a Villa—Down in the City" (xi); Masefield: "A Consecration" (xii); Lindsay: "The Eagle that is Forgotten" (xii); Noyes: "Kilmeny" (xii); Dobson: "The Prodigals" (vii), "The Wanderer" (vii), "A Kiss" (vii), and "When I Saw You Last, Rose" (vii); Shelley: "The Sensitive Plant"; Scott: "Proud Maisie"; Tennyson: "Come into the Garden, Maud"; Poe: "Annabel Lee" and "For Annie"; Browning: "How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix" and "Cavalier Tunes"; Lowell: "A Fable for Critics"; Lanier: "The Marshes of Glynn," "Sunrise," and "The Revenge of Hamish"; Swinburne: "Hymn to Proserpine" and "To Walt Whitman in America."

Wordsworth: "The Reverie of Poor Susan" and Bryant: "Green River" are poems in which, perhaps, the triple rhythm should not have been employed. With Longfellow's use of the dactylic hexameter in *Evangeline* and *The Courtship of Miles Standish,* the student may compare that of Goethe in *Hermann und Dorothea* and that of Clough in *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich.*

CHAPTER V. IAMBIC PENTAMETER

Matthew Arnold's essay, "On Translating Homer," contains some suggestive comments on the various metrical forms

which have been used in rendering the classical hexameter into English. In addition to those poems quoted in part in this chapter, the following are suggested for further study:

Blank Verse.—Thomson: *The Seasons;* Cowper: "The Task"; Wordsworth: "Michael" and "Tintern Abbey" (xi); Coleridge: "Hymn before Sunrise"; Byron: *Manfred* and "The Dream"; Shelley: "Alastor"; Bryant: "Thanatopsis" and "The Antiquity of Freedom"; Tennyson: "Morte d'Arthur"; Browning: "Fra Lippo Lippi" and "Andrea del Sarto"; Arnold: "Sohrab and Rustum"; Yeats: *The Land of Heart's Desire;* Noyes: *Drake;* Frost: "An Old Man's Winter Night" and "Birches"; Masters: *The Domesday Book;* Robinson: *Avon's Harvest, Lancelot* and *Merlin.*

Heroic Couplet.—Chaucer: Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales* (following the introductory section quoted in this chapter); Spenser: "Mother Hubbard's Tale"; Marlowe: "Hero and Leander"; Shakespeare: *Romeo and Juliet,* act ii, scene iii; Dryden: "Absalom and Achitophel"; Pope: *The Rape of the Lock* and *An Essay on Man;* Goldsmith: "The Deserted Village"; Cowper: "On the Receipt of my Mother's Picture"; Wordsworth: "Character of the Happy Warrior"; Byron: "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers"; Shelley: "Epipsychidion"; Keats: *Endymion* and "Lamia"; Longfellow: "Morituri Salutamus"; Holmes: "At the Saturday Club"; Macaulay: "A Jacobite's Epitaph" (ix); Swinburne: "Tristram of Lyonesse"; Masefield: "Biography" and "Ships"; Rupert Brooke: "The Great Lover"; Frost: "The Cow in Apple Time."

Heroic Quatrain.—Dryden: "Annus Mirabilis"; Wordsworth: "Elegiac Stanzas" (xi); Arnold: "Palladium"; Longfellow: "At the Arsenal of Springfield"; Watson: "Wordsworth's Grave"; Masefield: "August, 1914," "The River," and "The Wanderer"; Gibson: "Prelude" (xii); Lindsay: "Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight" (xi) and "On the Building of Springfield" (xi); Robinson: "Richard Cory," "Old Trails," "Theophilus," and "Veteran Sirens."

Ottava Rima.—Byron: *Don Juan* and "Beppo"; Shelley: "The Witch of Atlas"; Keats: "Isabella"; Longfellow: "The Birds of Killingworth."

Rime Royal.—Chaucer: "The Parliament of Fowls"; Shakespeare: "The Rape of Lucrece"; Wordsworth: "Resolution and Independence"; Masefield: "Dauber" and "The Daffodil Fields"; Amy Lowell: "The Cremona Violin."

Spenserian Stanza.—Burns: "The Cotter's Saturday Night"; Shelley: "Adonais" and "The Revolt of Islam"; Tennyson: "The Lotos-Eaters" (in part).

Terza Rima.—Byron: "The Prophecy of Dante"; Shelley: "The Triumph of Life"; Morris: "The Defence of Guenevere"; Noyes: "The Progress of Love"; Masters: "The Municipal Pier." Browning: "The Statue and the Bust" employs the terza rima rime scheme with anapestic tetrameter.

Odes.—Jonson: "A Pindaric Ode"; Milton: "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity"; Dryden: "Alexander's Feast"; Gray: "The Bard" and "The Progress of Poesy"; Collins: "Ode to Evening" (x); Wordsworth: "Ode to Duty" (iii); Coleridge: "France" and "Dejection"; Shelley: "To a Skylark" (iii); Keats: "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (iii), "Ode to a Nightingale," and "To Autumn"; Tennyson: "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington"; Swinburne: "To Victor Hugo"; Lowell: "Under the Old Elm" and "Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration"; William Vaughn Moody: "An Ode in Time of Hesitation."

Irregular Poems in Rime.—Milton: "Lycidas"; Dryden: "Song for St. Cecilia's Day" and "Alexander's Feast"; Collins: "The Passions"; Coleridge: "Kubla Khan" (iii) and "Christabel"; Arnold: "Dover Beach" (xi); Le Gallienne: "The Eternal Way" (xii); Amy Lowell: "Texas" (xi); Seeger: "I Have a Rendezvous with Death" (xii); Robinson: "The Man Against the Sky"; Lindsay: "The Santa Fe Trail"; Poe: "The Bells," "To Helen," and "Israfel"; Goethe: "Wanderer's Night-songs" (ix); Emerson: "Terminus"; Tennyson: "Maud"; Lanier: "Sunrise" and "The Marshes of Glynn"; Browning: "Home-Thoughts from Abroad"; Arnold: "The Forsaken Merman." An interesting study can be made of Victor Hugo's *"Les Djinns,"* in which the lines vary in length to suit the subject matter of the poem.

CHAPTER VI. THE BALLAD

For further discussion of the Popular Ballad, see Professor George Lyman Kittredge's Introduction to Kittredge and Sargent: *English and Scottish Popular Ballads;* Francis B. Gummere: *The Popular Ballad,* and *The Beginnings of Poetry;* and Andrew Lang's article on the *Ballad* in the *Encyclopædia Britannica.* These authors give what is called the orthodox theory of ballad authorship; the views of Professor Louise Pound are set forth in her *Poetic Origins and the Ballad.* W. Roy Mackenzie's *The Quest of the Ballad* is an extremely interesting account of the author's experiences in ballad collecting in Nova Scotia. Excellent collections of popular ballads are Gummere: *Old English Ballads;* Kittredge and Sargent: *English and Scottish Popular Ballads;* R. Brimley Johnson: *The Book of British Ballads;* Quiller-Couch: *The Oxford Book of Ballads;* Olive Dame Campbell and Cecil J. Sharp: *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians;* and John A. Lomax: *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads.*

For further reading, the following British popular ballads are suggested: "Edward"; "The Three Ravens"; "Thomas Rymer"; "The Twa Brothers"; "Lord Thomas and Fair Annet"; "Fair Margaret and Sweet William"; "The Wife of Usher's Well"; "Bonny Barbara Allen"; "The Gay Goshawk"; "Adam Bell"; "Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne"; "The Hunting of the Cheviot"; "Johnie Armstrong"; "Kinmont Willie."

The following literary ballads will repay study:—Drayton: "The Battle of Agincourt"; Cowper: "The Diverting History of John Gilpin"; Wordsworth: "Lucy Gray"; Coleridge: "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" (not strictly a ballad); Scott: "Rosabelle" and "The Eve of St. John"; Campbell: "Lord Ullin's Daughter"; Macaulay: "Horatius"; Tennyson: "The Defence of Lucknow," "The Revenge," and "Lady Clare"; Browning: "Hervé Riel"; Rossetti: "Sister Helen" and "The White Ship"; Longfellow: "The Skeleton in Armor," "The Wreck of the Hesperus," and "A Ballad of the French Fleet"; Whittier: "The Pipes at Lucknow," "Barclay of Ury," and "Cassandra Southwick"; Lanier: "The Re-

venge of Hamish"; Yeats: "The Ballad of Moll Magee" and "The Ballad of Father Gilligan"; Kipling: "Gunga Din," "Fuzzy-Wuzzy," and "The Ballad of East and West"; Noyes: "Forty Singing Seamen"; Masefield: "Cap on Head" and "The Hounds of Hell"; Amy Lowell: *Legends,* which contains some excellent ballads and narrative poems of the same general type.

CHAPTER VII. THE SONNET

Three sonnets are given in other chapters:—Wordsworth: "Composed upon Westminster Bridge" (xi); Odell Shepard: "Certain American Poets" (xii); and Robinson: "Monadnock through the Trees" (xii). Most poetic anthologies contain a number of sonnets. Collections devoted wholly to the sonnet are Laura E. Lockwood: *English Sonnets* and William Sharp: *Sonnets of the Nineteenth Century. The Oxford Book of Australasian Verse* contains a number of excellent sonnets. A detailed discussion of the technique of the sonnet is given in the Introduction to Sharp's *Sonnets of the Nineteenth Century.* Austin Dobson wrote a clever "A Sonnet in Dialogue." See also *Romeo and Juliet,* act i, scene v, lines 91 ff. In French verse the decasyllabic line is not a strict requirement. De Musset's well known *"Tristesse"* has octosyllabic lines. Comte de Resseguier's *"Epitaphe d'une Jeune Fille"* is a sonnet in single-syllable lines:

Fort
Belle,
Elle
Dort!
Sort
Frêle,
Quelle
Mort!
Rose
Close—
La
Brise
L'a
Prise.

The continued and growing popularity of the form has led to the recent establishment of a magazine entitled *The Sonnet.*

CHAPTER VIII. THE OLD FRENCH FORMS

Gleeson White's invaluable *Ballades and Rondeaus* contains an excellent history of the traditional exotic forms, and offers an inclusive anthology of these forms down to 1887. A volume of the same scope covering the past third of a century would be useful in giving an appraisal of recent efforts in the French forms. Suggestions for further reading have already been made in the chapter under the various types illustrated.

CHAPTER IX. LIGHT VERSE

Excellent discussions of *vers de société* will be found in the following admirable anthologies:—Locker-Lampson: *Lyra Elegantiarum;* Brander Matthews: *American Familiar Verse;* Carolyn Wells: *A Vers de Société Anthology.* For all types of humorous verse Carolyn Wells's *A Book of Humorous Verse* is an invaluable collection.

Nearly all the poems given in Chapter VII (The Old French Forms) belong to light verse. See also Waller: "Go, Lovely Rose" in Chapter III. For very short poems of various types, see Kipling's "Epitaphs of the War"; Robinson's "Variations of Greek Themes"; William Watson's "Epigrams"; and any of the poems of Emily Dickinson and John B. Tabb.

CHAPTER X. FREE VERSE

Interesting discussions of free verse will be found in Amy Lowell's *Tendencies in Modern American Poetry* and in her prefaces to *Can Grande's Castle* and *Sword Blades and Poppy Seed;* Spingarn: *Creative Criticism;* Perry: *A Study of Poetry;* and Lowes: *Convention and Revolt in Poetry.* The student who has read little or nothing from Whitman will do well to begin with Perry's biography, Stevenson's Essay on Whitman, and the selections from Whitman's poetry in Boynton's *American Poetry* or Page's *Chief American Poets.* Excellent examples of "polyphonic prose" are Amy Lowell's

"Guns as Keys" in *Can Grande's Castle* and John Gould Fletcher's "The Passing of the West" in *Breakers and Granite.* For a discussion of other rimeless forms than free verse, see Brander Matthews: *A Study of Versification,* Chapter IX. Whitman's "The Singer in the Prison" combines free verse with rimed regular verse in an interesting manner.

Poems in free verse quoted in other chapters are:—Fletcher: "Blake" (i); Crapsey: "Triad" (ix) and "The Warning" (ix); Fletcher: "Broadway's Canyon" (xi); Sandburg: "Chicago" (xi) and "A. E. F." (xii); Masters: "George Gray" (xii) and "John Hancock Otis" (xii).

CHAPTER XI. POEMS STUDIED BY THEME

Poe's discussion of "The Raven" is found in "The Philosophy of Composition." Other poems on death will be found in Chapters III, IX, and X. The following poems on old age may be profitably compared:—Tennyson: "Ulysses" (v); Browning: "Rabbi ben Ezra"; Arnold: "Growing Old"; Longfellow: "Morituri Salutamus"; Holmes: "The Old Man Dreams"; Dobson: "Growing Gray"; Robinson: "Isaac and Archibald"; Masefield: "On Growing Old."

Most of the poems about Lincoln are found in Mary Wright-Davis's *The Book of Lincoln.* An earlier and less complete anthology is A. Dallas Williams's *The Praise of Lincoln.* For discussion of Lincoln's rôle in poetry, see Carl Van Doren: "The Poetical Cult of Lincoln" in *The Nation* for May 17, 1919; and John Drinkwater's *Lincoln, the World-Emancipator.*

Other nature poems in the book are:—Burns: "Afton Water" (ii); Stevenson: "Requiem" (ii); Kipling: "The Gipsy Trail" (ii); Shelley: "To Night" (ii); Swinburne: "The Garden of Proserpine" (iii); Wordsworth: "I Wandered Lonely" (iii); Shelley: "To a Skylark" (iii); Cowper: "The Poplar Field" (iv); Swinburne: "A Forsaken Garden" (iv); Shelley: "The Cloud" (iv); Lanier: "The Song of the Chattahoochee" (iv); Yeats: "The Lake Isle of Innisfree" (iv); Masefield: "The West Wind" (iv); Wordsworth: From *The Prelude* (v); Keats: From "Hyperion" (v); Tennyson: "Ulysses" (v); Bryant: From "The Prairies" (v); Emerson: "The Snow-

Storm" (v); Frost: "Mending Wall" (v) and "The Tuft of Flowers" (v); Gray: "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" (v); Byron: From *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (v); Shelley: "Ode to the West Wind" (v); Keats: "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" (vii); Wordsworth: "The World is Too Much with Us" (vii); Shelley: "Ozymandias" (vii); Keats: "On the Grasshopper and Cricket" (vii); Lang: "Ballade to Theocritus in Winter" (viii); McCrae; "In Flanders Fields" (viii); Bunner: "A Pitcher of Mignonette" (viii); Scollard: "In the Sultan's Garden" (viii); Goethe: "Wanderer's Night-songs" (ix); Arnold: "Philomela" (x); Whitman: "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer" (x) and "As Toilsome I Wander'd Virginia's Woods" (x); Henley: "Margaritae Sorori" (x); Fletcher: "Exit" (x); Gibson: "Prelude" (xii); Robinson: "The Dark Hills" (xii) and "Monadnock through the Trees" (xii).

Interesting poems dealing with the city are:—Bryant: "The Hymn of the City"; Harte: "San Francisco"; Masters: "The Loop"; Amy Lowell: "Towns in Color," in her *Men, Women and Ghosts.* See also many poems in Fletcher: *Breakers and Granite* and Sandburg: *Chicago Poems.*

CHAPTER XII. THE CONTEMPORARY POETS

Interesting discussions of contemporary poets are found in Amy Lowell: *Tendencies in Modern American Poetry;* Louis Untermeyer: *The New Era in American Poetry;* Conrad Aiken: *Scepticisms: Notes on Contemporary Poetry;* Mary C. Sturgeon: *Studies of Contemporary Poets;* Manly and Rickert: *Contemporary British Literature* and *Contemporary American Literature;* Marguerite Wilkinson: *New Voices;* Arthur Waugh: *Tradition and Change;* John Erskine: *The Kinds of Poetry;* Lowes: *Convention and Revolt in Poetry;* Phelps: *The Advance of English Poetry in the Twentieth Century.*

Most of the following excellent anthologies also contain valuable criticism:—Untermeyer: *Modern American Poetry* (revised and enlarged edition) and *Modern British Poetry;* Marguerite Wilkinson: *New Voices;* Harriet Monroe and Alice Corbin Henderson: *The New Poetry;* Jessie B. Ritten-

house: *The Little Book of Modern Verse* and *The Second Book of Modern Verse.*

In this chapter we have not discussed all the contemporary poets who are represented by poems in other chapters. For review it will be well to look up the following names in the General Index at the end of the volume, although some of these poets are contemporary in time only (the names of American poets are indicated by an asterisk):

Robert Bridges; Rupert Brooke; * Gelett Burgess; * Witter Bynner; * Adelaide Crapsey; Walter de la Mare; Austin Dobson; Lord Dunsany; * John Gould Fletcher; * Robert Frost; Wilfrid Wilson Gibson; Edmund Gosse; Thomas Hardy; * "H. D."; William Ernest Henley; * Joyce Kilmer; Rudyard Kipling; Francis Ledwidge; Richard Le Gallienne; * Vachel Lindsay; Andrew Lang; * Haniel Long; * Amy Lowell; John Masefield; * Edgar Lee Masters; John McCrae; * Edna St. Vincent Millay; * Christopher Morley; Eliot Napier; Alfred Noyes; * Josephine Preston Peabody; * Ezra Pound; * Edwin Arlington Robinson; * Carl Sandburg; Siegfried Sassoon; * Clinton Scollard; * Alan Seeger; * Odell Shepard; Rabindranath Tagore; * Sara Teasdale; * Louis Untermeyer; * Henry van Dyke; William Watson; * Willard Wattles; Theodore Watts-Dunton; * John Hall Wheelock; William Butler Yeats.

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GENERAL INDEX

to

POETS, TITLES OF POEMS, AND MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

The names of poets quoted in this anthology are printed in small capitals. American poets are indicated by an asterisk (*), living poets by a dagger (†). All titles are printed in italics.

ANONYMOUS (*i.e.*, poems by unknown authors), *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot,* 28-29; *John Brown's Body,* 46-47; *Lord Randal,* 239; *The Twa Corbies,* 240; *Sir Patrick Spens,* 241-242; *Fair Helen,* 243-244; *Jesse James,* 244-246; *Katharine Jaffray,* 246-248; *The Young Lady of Niger,* 345; *Brussels Cross Inscription,* 352.

Abraham Lincoln (Malone), quoted 401.

Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight (Lindsay), 473, quoted 409-410.

acatalectic, 72.

accent, 66.

†*Adams, Franklin P., 326.

Addison, Joseph, 237, 411.

A. E. F. (Sandburg), quoted 480.

Æneid, Vergil's, 67.

Afton Water (Burns), quoted 31-32.

†*Aiken, Conrad, 468.

†Aldington, Richard, 460.

†*ALDINGTON, MRS. RICHARD. See "H. D."

*ALDRICH, THOMAS BAILEY, 317, 324, 348; poem quoted: *Palabras Cariñosas,* 323-324.

Alexander Throckmorton (Masters), quoted 372.

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alliteration, 81, 82.

Altgeld, John P., 464.

America (Smith), 42, 43-45, quoted 44-45.

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anapestic meters, 68, 138, 140, 238, 250.

Anglo-Saxon verse, 352, 365.

Annie Laurie (Lady Scott), quoted 34-35.

Anthology, the Greek, 350, 466.

Apology, An (Morris), 110, quoted 215-216.

Aristotle, 2, 6, 363.

ARNOLD, MATTHEW, 1, 2, 7, 13, 14, 17, 91-92, 182, 275, 285, 364, 369, 400, 411, 418; poems quoted: *Destiny,* 92; *Shakespeare,* 285-286; *Philomela,* 369-370; *Requiescat,* 395-396; *Dover Beach,* 418-419.

Ars Victrix (Dobson), quoted in part 192.

Arthur, King, 400.

As Toilsome I Wander'd Virginia's Woods (Whitman), quoted 378.

assonance, 82, 83.

Astrid (Noyes), quoted in part 82.

At Magnolia Cemetery (Timrod), quoted 122-123.

Atalanta in Calydon, 141.
Atlantic Monthly, The, 323.
August, 1914, 474.
Auld Lang Syne (Burns), quoted 33-34.
autograph poems, 357-358.
Aylmer, Rose, 394.

Baby's Feet, A (Swinburne), quoted 308.
Bacheller, Irving, 401.
ballad, the, Chapter VI *passim,* 235 ff.
Ballad of Dead Ladies, The (Villon), quoted 300-301.
Ballad of Heroes, A (Dobson), quoted 297-298.
ballad stanza, the, 77, 252, 257.
ballade, the, 295 ff.
Ballade of the Southern Cross (Lang), quoted 296-297.
Ballade to Theocritus, in Winter (Lang), quoted 295-296.
Ballades and Rondeaus, 295.
Ballades in Blue China, 295, 296.
Ballot, The (Pierpont), quoted 115.
Bannockburn (Burns), quoted 49.
Bard's Epitaph, A (Burns), 351, quoted 99-100.
Barney McGee (Hovey), quoted in part 152.
Barrack-room Ballads, 252, 253, 447.
Battle Hymn of the Republic, The (Mrs. Howe), 47-48, quoted 48.
Baudelaire, Charles, 400.
Beaumont, Francis, 112; poem quoted: *On the Tombs in Westminster Abbey,* 113.
Beaumont, Sir George, 413, 414.
Beethoven, Ludwig Van, 21.
Believe Me if All Those Endearing Young Charms (Moore), 55, quoted 38.
†*Benét, Stephen Vincent, 468.
†*Benét, William Rose, 453, 468.
Ben Jonson Entertains a Man from Stratford (Robinson), 462, quoted in part 188-189.
Bennett, Arnold, 13.
Berlin, Irving, 27.
Bible, the, 251-252, 367, 368, 373.
†Binyon, Laurence; poem quoted: *For the Fallen,* 476-477.
Blake, William, 15, 107, 127, 370-371; poems quoted: *The Tiger* (in part), 72; *Songs of Innocence: Introduction,* 74.
Blake (Fletcher), quoted 15.
blank verse, 172 ff., 192.
Blessed Damozel, The, 104, 392.
Bonnie Doon (Burns), quoted in part 70.
Book, A (Dickinson), quoted 4.
Book of Lincoln, The, 406.
Bowles, William Lisle, 269.
†*Branch, Anna Hempstead, 468.
Break, Break, Break (Tennyson), quoted 168-169.
Brereton, Mrs. Jane; poem quoted: *On Beau Nash's Picture,* 356.
Bride of Abydos, The (Byron), quoted in part 165-166.
Bridge of Sighs, The (Hood), 342, quoted 153-156.
†Bridges, Robert, 282-284, 445; poem quoted: *Who Builds a Ship,* 284.
Broadway's Canyon (Fletcher), quoted 432-433.
Brooke, Rupert, 210, 284, 474, 475; poem quoted: *The Soldier,* 284-285.
Browne, Sir Thomas, 364.
Browne, William, poem quoted: *On the Countess Dowager of Pembroke,* 349.
Browning, Mrs. Elizabeth Barrett, 282-283, 321, 359; poem quoted: *How Do I Love Thee?* 283.
Browning, Robert, 5, 156, 181, 182, 282, 364, 376, 392, 411, 428, 447, 466; poems quoted:

Prospice, 146-147; *The Year's at the Spring,* 149; *The Lost Leader,* 157-158; *My Last Duchess,* 199-201; *Up at a Villa—Down in the City,* 429-432.
Bruce's Address to his Army at Bannockburn (Burns), quoted 120-121.
Brussels Cross Inscription, quoted 352.
*Bryant, William Cullen, 87, 88-90, 185-186, 204, 286, 428; poems quoted: *The Poet,* 9-10; *To a Water-fowl,* 88-89; *Thanatopsis* (in part), 90; *The Prairies* (in part), 186-187; *The Death of Lincoln,* 403.
*Bunner, Henry Cuyler, 294, 309; poems quoted: *A Pitcher of Mignonette,* 309; *"One, Two, Three,"* 335-336.
†*Burgess, Gelett, 340; poem quoted: *The Purple Cow,* 340.
Burial of Sir John Moore, The (Wolfe), quoted 145-146.
Burns, Robert, 14, 30-34 (his songs), 55-56, 321, 350, 351, 392, 411; poems quoted: *Afton Water,* 31-32; *Auld Lang Syne,* 33-34; *John Anderson,* 55-56; *Bonnie Doon* (in part), 70; *A Bard's Epitaph,* 99-100; *Bruce's Address to his Army at Bannockburn,* 120-121; *Epitaph on John Dove,* 351; *Highland Mary,* 392-393.
Burns (Whittier), quoted in part 5.
†*Bynner, Witter, 8, 316, 360, 406, 468; poem quoted in part: *The New World,* 381.
Byron, Lord, 102, 144, 279-280, 336, 339, 372, 373, 411, 481; poems quoted: *She Walks in Beauty,* 70-71; *The Destruction of Sennacherib,* 138-139; *O Talk Not to Me,* 139-140; *The Bride of Abydos* (in part), 165-166; *The Vision of Judgment* (in part), 214-215; *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (in part), 221-222, 426-427; *Sonnet on Chillon,* 280; *To Thomas Moore,* 337; *Lines Written in an Album at Malta,* 357-358; *Oh! Snatch'd Away in Beauty's Bloom,* 395.

Campbell, Mary, 392-393.
Campbell, Thomas, 481.
Carey, Henry (?), 44-45, poem quoted: *God Save the King,* 45.
Carlyle, Thomas, 8.
†*Carman, Bliss, 406.
Carroll, Lewis, 340.
*Cary, Phœbe, poem quoted: *When Lovely Woman Wants a Favor,* 345-346.
Castle of Indolence, The (Thomson), quoted in part 219.
catalectic, 71.
catalexis, 152.
*Cawein, Madison, 444.
Century of Roundels, A, 308.
Certain American Poets (Shepard), quoted 458.
chain verse, 316.
Chambered Nautilus, The (Holmes), quoted in part 90.
chant royal, the, 302.
Chapman, George, 271.
Charles II, 350.
Chaucer, Geoffrey, 14, 215, 294, 302, 454; poems quoted: *Prologue* (in part), 195; *To Rosemounde, A Balade,* 303.
Chesterfield, Earl of, poem quoted: *Immortal Newton,* 356.
Chevy Chase, 237.
Chicago (Sandburg), 384, 433, quoted 433-435.
Childe Harold's Pilgrimage (Byron), 144, 411, 426, quoted in part 221-222, 426-427.
Churchhill, Winston, 401.
clichés, 12.
city in poetry, the, 386-387, 425-442.
classical meters, 68, 161-162, 368.

Cloud, The (Shelley), quoted 149-152.
Clough, Arthur Hugh, 400.
Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, 2, 17, 60, 65, 129, 144, 166, 226, 240, 252, 339, 364, 410, 411, 481; poems quoted: *Metrical Feet* (in part), 65; *Kubla Khan,* 130-132; *The Knight's Tomb,* 166-167.
Collins, William, 204, 411; poem quoted: *Ode to Evening,* 365-367.
"colyumists," 326.
Come, Republic (Masters), quoted 382-384.
Come, Sleep! O Sleep (Sidney), quoted 276-277.
common meter, 77.
Composed upon Westminster Bridge (Wordsworth), quoted 428.
Comus (Milton), 322, quoted in part 177-178.
Concord Hymn (Emerson), quoted 56-57.
Conrad, Joseph, 453.
Consecration, A (Masefield), 110, quoted 455-456.
contemporary poetry, see Chapter XII *passim* 443 ff., and notes to Chapter XII.
Convention and Revolt in Poetry, 16.
Cooper, James Fenimore, 453.
Coronach (Scott), 147, quoted 148.
cowboy ballads, 237, 244 ff.
Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads, 244.
Cowper, William, 286, 318, 339, 411, 425; poem quoted: *The Poplar Field,* 140-141.
Crabbe, George, 481.
*Crapsey, Adelaide, 468; poems quoted: *On Seeing Weather-beaten Trees,* 194; *Triad,* 360; *The Warning,* 360.
Creative Criticism, 388.
Creeds (Wattles), quoted 356.
Croce, Benedetto, 8, 226.
Crossing the Bar (Tennyson), 22, quoted 62-63.

dactylic verse, 68, 152 ff.
Daffodil Fields, The, 447.
Danny Deever (Kipling), quoted 252-254.
Dante, 183, 191, 222, 286 ff., 292, 392.
Darest Thou Now, O Soul (Whitman), 378, quoted 379.
Dark Hills, The (Robinson), 462, quoted 462-463.
Darwin, Charles, 20, 416, 417.
Dauber, 454.
Dead Men Tell No Tales (Long), quoted 126.
death, poems on, 378, 389-400.
Death of Lincoln, The (Bryant), quoted 403.
Decatur, Stephen, 470.
Dedication, 104.
†de la Mare, Walter, 421.
DeQuincey, Thomas, 129, 364.
Derby, Earl of, 193.
Destiny (Arnold), quoted 92.
Destruction of Sennacherib, The (Byron), quoted 138-139.
*Dickinson, Emily, poems quoted: *A Book,* 4; *This Quiet Dust,* 353.
didactic verse, 7-8, 90.
dimeter, 75.
Dixie, 22, 42, 46.
Dobson, Henry Austin, 294, 302, 306, 312, 323, 339, 360-361, 446; poems quoted: *Ars Victrix* (in part), 192; *A Ballad of Heroes,* 297-298; *The Prodigals,* 299; *In After Days,* 305; *The Wanderer,* 306-307; *Vitas Hinnuleo,* 307-308; *A Kiss,* 309; *When I Saw You Last, Rose,* 310-311; *Jocosa Lyra,* 361-362.
Dodgson, Charles L. See Carroll, Lewis.
Domesday Book, 465.
double ballade, the, 302.

Douglas, William, poem quoted: *Annie Laurie,* 34-35.
Dover Beach (Arnold), 364, 418, quoted 418-419.
Doyle, Sir Francis Hastings Charles, 94; poem quoted: *The Private of the Buffs,* 94-96.
Drake, 65, 453.
dramatic monologue, the, 199.
Drayton, Michael, poem quoted: *Since There's No Help,* 277.
Dried Marjoram, 447.
†Drinkwater, John, 401.
Drum-Taps, 377.
duple meters, the, see Chapter III *passim,* 65 ff.
Dvořak, 22, 28.
Dryden, John, 196, 226, 364; poem quoted: *Lines Printed under the Engraved Portrait of Milton,* 197.
†Dunsany, Lord, 3, 373; poems in prose quoted: *The Worm and the Angel,* 373-374; *The Prayer of the Flowers,* 442.

Earth (Wheelock), 422, quoted 423-425.
†*Eastman, Max, 15.
Eggleston, Edward, 401.
Elegiac Stanzas (Wordsworth), quoted 414-416.
elegies, great, 399-400.
Elegy (Millay), quoted 398-399.
Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard (Gray), 204, quoted 205-210.
Eliot, George, 391.
*Emerson, Ralph Waldo, 6, 128, 364, 375, 400, 462; poems quoted: *Concord Hymn,* 56-57; *The Rhodora* (in part), 87; *This Shining Moment,* 172; *The Snow-Storm,* 187-188.
Emmett, Daniel Decatur, 46.
Endymion, 104.
England my Mother (Watson), quoted in part 443.
Enoch Arden, 447.
Enslaved, 454.
epitaph, the, 99, 209, 349 ff.
Epitaph Intended for Sir Isaac Newton (Pope), quoted 349.
Epitaph on Charles II (Rochester), quoted 350.
Epitaph on John Dove (Burns), quoted 351.
Eternal Way, The (Le Gallienne), quoted 459-460.
Evangeline (Longfellow), 368, 375, quoted in part 162-163.
Eve of St. Agnes, The (Keats), 3, quoted in part 220.
Everlasting Mercy, The, 453, 454.
Exit (Fletcher), quoted 385-386.
eye-rime, 58, 98.

Faërie Queene, The (Spenser), quoted in part 218-219.
Fair Harvard (Gilman), 38-40, quoted 39-40.
feminine rime, 81, 100.
Fence, A (Sandburg), quoted 384-385.
†*Ficke, Arthur Davison, 468.
*Field, Eugene, 326; poem quoted: *The Truth about Horace,* 326-327.
Fifty-one Tales, 373.
†*Filsinger, Mrs. See Teasdale, Sara.
Firelight (Robinson), quoted 290-291.
Fitzgerald, Edward, poem quoted in part: *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám,* 213.
fixed forms, 268-269, 294 ff.
Fletcher, Andrew, of Saltoun, 235.
Fletcher, John, poem quoted in part; *Henry VIII,* 176-177.
†*Fletcher, John Gould, 405, 460; poems quoted: *Exit,* 385-386; *Broadway's Canyon,* 432-433.
†Flint, T. S., 460.
Flower in the Crannied Wall (Tennyson), quoted 412.
folk-song, 28-30, 58.

For All We Have and Are (Kipling), quoted 118-120.
For an Autograph (J. R. Lowell), quoted 358.
For Metaphors of Man (Watson), quoted 410.
Forsaken Garden, A (Swinburne), 141, quoted 142-144.
*Foster, Stephen Collins, 23-28, 35, 52; poem quoted: *Old Folks at Home,* 23 ff.
Fra Lippo Lippi (Browning,) quoted in part 5.
free verse, 359, 360, 363 ff (Chapter X *passim*).
*Freneau, Philip, 87.
†*Frost, Robert, 188, 380, 421, 445, 463; poems quoted: *Mending Wall,* 189-190; *The Tuft of Flowers,* 201-203.

Garden by the Sea, A (Morris), 411, quoted in part 412.
Garden of Proserpine, The (Swinburne), 83, quoted 78-80.
Gautier, Théophile, 192, 294.
Gay, John, 339; poem quoted: *Life is a Jest,* 350.
George, David Lloyd, 408.
George Gray (Masters), quoted 466-467.
Georgians, the, 446.
†Gibson, Wilfrid Wilson, 380, 446, 477; poem quoted: *Prelude,* 456.
*Gilder, Richard Watson, 292; poem quoted: *Navies nor Armies,* 359.
*Gilman, Rev. Samuel, 38; poem quoted: *Fair Harvard,* 39-40.
Gipsy Trail, The (Kipling), quoted 53-55.
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang, 163, 165, 425; poems quoted: *Wanderer's Night-songs,* 353-354. See also Longfellow, H. W.
Golden Treasury, The, 139, 242.
Goldschmidt, Mme., 60.
Goldsmith, Oliver, 101, 339, 345; poem quoted: *When Lovely Woman Stoops to Folly,* 101.
Go, Lovely Rose (Waller), quoted 87-88.
†Gosse, Edmund, poem quoted: *Sestina to F. H.,* 314-315.
†Graves, Robert, 477.
Gray, Thomas, 14, 17, 204, 210, 226, 353, 411; poem quoted: *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard,* 205-210.
Greek Anthology, the, 350, 466.
Grenfell, Julian, 475.
Guinevere, 372, 373.
†*Guiterman, Arthur, 406, 408, 468.

Hadrian, poem quoted: *To his Soul,* 352-353. See also Prior, Matthew.
†*Hagedorn, Hermann, 406.
Hallam, Arthur Henry, 400, 416.
Hamlet (Shakespeare), 12, quoted in part 175.
†Hardy, Thomas, 391; poems quoted: *Her Initials,* 355; *In a Wood,* 420-421.
Hark! Hark! the Lark (Shakespeare), quoted 36-37.
*Harte, Francis Bret, 115, 318, 405; poems quoted: *Her Letter,* 318-320; *Mrs. Judge Jenkins,* 346-348; *San Francisco* (in part), 427.
Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 391.
†*"H. D." (Mrs. Richard Aldington), 381, 460; poem quoted: *Oread,* 461-462.
Health, A (Pinkney), quoted 338-339.
Helen of Troy, 173, 174.
Henley, William Ernest, 90, 294, 380; poems quoted: *Invictus,* 91; *Romance,* 121-122; *Villanelle,* 311; *Margaritae Sorori,* 380-381.
Henry, O., 448.
Henry V, 470.

Henry VIII (Shakespeare and Fletcher), quoted in part 176-177.
heptameter, 75.
Her Initials (Hardy), quoted 355.
Her Letter (Harte), quoted 318-320.
†*Herford, Oliver, 340.
Herodotus, 363.
heroic couplet, 194 ff., 349.
heroic quatrain, 203 ff.
Herrick, Robert, 324, 361; poems quoted: *Upon his Departure Hence,* 76; *To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time,* 325.
hexameter, 75, 162-163, 368.
Hiawatha (Longfellow), quoted in part 71.
Highland Mary (Burns), quoted 392-393.
Highwayman, The (Noyes), 262, 452, quoted 262-267.
His Friends He Loved (Watson), quoted 355.
hokku, the, 360.
*Holmes, Oliver Wendell, 318, 405, 457, 459, 462; poems quoted: *The Chambered Nautilus* (in part), 90; *The Last Leaf,* 328-330.
Homer, 13, 286, 368, 373-374; opening paragraph of the *Iliad* quoted 193.
Hood, Thomas, 339, 340, 342; poems quoted: *The Bridge of Sighs,* 153-156; *Faithless Nelly Gray,* 342-345.
Horace, 272, 307, 326-329; poem quoted: *Questioning Lydia,* 327-328. See also Untermeyer, Louis.
†Housman, Alfred Edward, poem quoted in part: *Reveille,* 73-74.
*Hovey, Richard, 117, 152; poem quoted: *Unmanifest Destiny,* 117-118.
How Do I Love Thee? (Mrs. Browning), quoted 283.
*Howe, Mrs. Julia Ward, 47; poem quoted: *The Battle Hymn of the Republic,* 48.
Hunt, Leigh, 281, 356, 357; poem quoted: *Rondeau,* 357.
Hunting Song (Scott), quoted 72-73.
hymn, the, 40-41.
Hymn to the Night (Longfellow), quoted 127-128.
hypercatalectic, 81.
Hyperion (Keats), quoted in part 181.

iambic verse, 66, 69, 70. See Chapters II and V *passim.*
iambic pentameter, 172, 194. See Chapter V *passim.*
iambic tetrameter, 115.
I am His Highness' Dog at Kew (pope), quoted 355.
I Have a Rendezvous with Death (Seeger), quoted 474-475.
Ibsen, Henrik, 371, 372.
Idea, 277.
Idylls of the King, The, 113, 182, 447.
If, 448.
Iliad, The, 235, 270, 373, 374; opening paragraph quoted 193.
Il Penseroso, 72, 204.
Imagists, the, 107, 226, 365, 460-462.
Immortal Newton (Chesterfield), quoted 356.
I Never See the Red Rose Crown the Year (Masefield), quoted 289.
In After Days (Dobson), quoted 305.
In a Station of the Metro (Pound), quoted 360
In a Wood (Hardy), quoted 420-421.
industrial life in poetry, 435 ff.
initial rime, 82.
In Flanders Fields (McCrae), 303, 474, quoted 304.
In Memoriam (Tennyson),

quoted in part 108-109, 417-418.
Inscription by the Sea, An (Robinson), quoted 350.
internal rime, 108.
In the Sultan's Garden (Scollard), quoted 312-313.
Intimations of Immortality (Wordsworth), 412, quoted 228-234.
Invictus (Henley), quoted 91.
I Shall Not Care (Teasdale), quoted 124.
Ivanhoe, 252.
I Wandered Lonely (Wordsworth), quoted 86.

Jacobite's Epitaph, A (Macaulay), quoted 351-352.
James, Jesse, 244-246.
James, William, 471.
Jesse James, quoted 244-246.
Jocosa Lyra (Dobson), quoted 361-362.
John Anderson (Burns), quoted 55-56.
John Brown's Body, quoted 46-47.
John Hancock Otis (Masters), quoted 467.
†*Johnson, Robert Underwood, 406.
JONSON, BEN, 71, 349; poems quoted: *Hymn to Diana* (in part), 71; *Song to Celia*, 37.
Katharine Jaffray, quoted 246-48.
KEATS, JOHN, 3, 4, 5, 59, 60, 104, 106, 129, 160, 181, 226, 252, 270, 281, 369, 400, 411; poems quoted: *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, 105-106; *Hyperion* (in part), 181; *Sleep and Poetry* (in part), 198-199; *The Eve of St. Agnes* (in part), 220; *La Belle Dame sans Merci*, 257-259; *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer*, 271; *On the Grasshopper and Cricket*, 282.
*KEY, FRANCIS SCOTT, poem quoted: *The Star-Spangled Banner*, 42-43.
Kilmeny (Noyes), quoted 479.
*KILMER, JOYCE, 475; poem quoted: *Trees*, 422.
King, The (Kipling), 436, quoted 449-450.
KINGSLEY, CHARLES, poem quoted: *Young and Old*, 100-101.
†KIPLING, RUDYARD, 7, 92, 112, 313, 436, 443, 446, 448-450, 472-473; poems quoted: *The Gipsy Trail*, 53-55; *The White Man's Burden*, 92-94; *For All We Have and Are*, 118-120; *Danny Deever*, 252-254; *The King*, 449-450; *Recessional*, 472-473.
Kirkland, Winifred, 174.
Kiss, A (Dobson), quoted 309.
Kitchener, Lord, 448.
Knight's Tomb, The (Coleridge), quoted 166-167.
Kubla Khan (Coleridge), 129, 226, 227, 364, quoted 130-132.
kyrielle, the, 315-316.

La Belle Dame sans Merci (Keats), 252, quoted 257-259.
Lachrimae Musarum (Watson), 400, quoted in part, 1.
Lady of the Lake, The, 147-148, 152, 411.
Lake Isle of Innisfree, The (Yeats), quoted 169-170.
L'Allegro, 21, 72.
Lamb, Charles, 364, 391, 432.
Lamp, The (Teasdale), quoted 368-369.
Lancelot, 188, 447.
Land of Heart's Desire, The (Yeats), song quoted 64.
LANDOR, WALTER SAVAGE, 181, 339, 361, 392, 411; poems quoted: *To Robert Browning*, 182; *On his Seventy-fifth Birthday*, 354; *On Death*, 354; *With Petrarch's Sonnets*, 354; *Rose Aylmer*, 394.

LANG, ANDREW, 193, 294, 295 ff., 300, 339, 446; poems quoted: *Ballade to Theocritus, in Winter*, 295-296; *Ballade of the Southern Cross*, 296-297.
*LANIER, SIDNEY, 59, 60, 163, 259, 372; poem quoted: *The Song of the Chattahoochee*, 164-165.
Last Leaf, The (Holmes), quoted 328-330.
Lavater, Louis, 292.
†Lawrence, D. H., 460.
Lay of the Last Minstrel, The (Scott), quoted in part 125-126.
LEAR, EDWARD, 340; poem quoted: *The Pobble Who Has No Toes*, 340-342.
Leaves of Grass, 369, 371, 372.
LEDWIDGE, FRANCIS, 475; poem quoted in part: *Soliloquy*, 475-476.
Lee, Robert E., 401.
Lee, Sir Sidney, 285.
†LE GALLIENNE, RICHARD, poem quoted: *The Eternal Way*, 459-460.
Les Misérables, 144.
Life is a Jest (Gay), quoted 350.
light verse, Chapter IX *passim*, 317 ff.
limerick, the, 345.
Lincoln, Abraham, 52, 70, 328, 400-410, 439.
†*LINDSAY, VACHEL, 211, 380, 406, 437, 463-464, 473; poems quoted: *Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight*, 409-410; *On the Building of Springfield*, 437-439; *The Eagle that is Forgotten*, 464-465.
Lines Printed under the Engraved Portrait of Milton (Dryden), quoted 197.
Lines Written in an Album at Malta (Byron), quoted 357-358.
Lisle, Rouget de, 23.
Literature in a Changing Age, 446.
Lochinvar (Scott), 246 ff., quoted 248-250.
LOCKER-LAMPSON, FREDERICK, 321, 322, 339, 361; poem quoted: *My Mistress's Boots*, 330-331, 332.
*LOINES, RUSSELL HILLIARD, poem quoted: *On a Magazine Sonnet*, 348.
Lomax, John A., 244.
London, 1802 (Wordsworth), quoted 278-279.
†*LONG, HANIEL, poem quoted: *Dead Men Tell No Tales*, 126.
*LONGFELLOW, HENRY WADSWORTH, 7, 12, 13, 71, 252, 259, 286-287, 317, 365, 368, 374, 375, 452, 457, 458-459; poems quoted: *Hiawatha* (in part), 71; *Hymn to the Night*, 127-128; *Evangeline* (in part), 162-163; *Oft Have I Seen at Some Cathedral Door*, 287; *O Star of Morning and of Liberty*, 287; *Wanderer's Night-songs*, 353-354.
Lord Randal, quoted 239.
Lost Leader, The (Browning), 156, quoted 157-158.
Love, 139.
LOVELACE, RICHARD, poem quoted: *To Lucasta, on Going to the Wars*, 98-99.
†*LOWELL, AMY, 2, 4, 316, 360, 381, 445, 447, 454, 460, 463; poem quoted: *Texas*, 440-441.
*LOWELL, JAMES RUSSELL, 8, 17, 259, 339, 358, 359, 457, 459; poems quoted: *For an Autograph*, 358; *To Those Who Died*, 358; *Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration* (in part), 404-405.
Lowes, John L., 16, 181.
Lyra Elegantiarum, 321, 322.
lyric, the, 64.
Lyrical Ballads, The, 83, 461.

Lyrics and Epics (Aldrich), quoted in part 317.

Macaulay, Lord, 444; poem quoted: *A Jacobite's Epitaph,* 351-352.
machinery, and poetry, 435-437, 448-450.
†*Mackaye, Percy, 406, 468.
*Malone, Walter, poem quoted: *Abraham Lincoln,* 401.
Manfred, 426.
Margaritæ Sorori (Henley), quoted 380-381.
†*Markham, Edwin, 406, 468.
†*Marks, Mrs. Lionel, see Peabody, Josephine Preston.
Marlowe, Christopher, 173, 196; poem quoted: *Doctor Faustus* (in part), 173-174.
Marmion, 248.
masculine rime, 81.
†Masefield, John, 110, 201, 210, 215-217, 252, 262, 280, 288-290, 421, 445, 446, 447, 448, 453-456, 473, 475, 482; poems quoted: *The West Wind,* 170-171; *The Widow in the Bye Street* (in part), 217; *The Yarn of the "Loch Achray,"* 254-256; *Now They are Gone,* 288-289; *I Never See the Red Rose Crown the Year,* 289; *On Growing Old,* 290; *A Consecration,* 455-456.
Master, The (Robinson), quoted 406-408.
†*Masters, Edgar Lee, 188, 373, 380, 381, 405, 445, 463, 465-467; poems quoted: *Alexander Throckmorton,* 372; *Come, Republic,* 382-384; *George Gray,* 466-467; *John Hancock Otis,* 467.
†*Matthews, Brander, 294, 312, 321.
Maud Muller, 346.
Maupassant, Guy de, 2.
McCrae, John, 303, 468, 474, 475; poem quoted: *In Flanders Fields,* 304.
Melville, Herman, 453.
Mending Wall (Frost), quoted 189-190.
Meredith, George, 275, 372, 373.
Merlin, 188, 447.
Merlin and the Gleam, 365.
meter, 68 and *passim.*
methods of studying poetry, 388.
Midsummer Night's Dream, A (Shakespeare), quoted in part 174-175.
Millais, John Everett, 391.
†*Millay, Edna St. Vincent, 468; poem quoted: *Elegy,* 398-399.
*Miller, Cincinnatus Heine ("Joaquin"), 115, 117; poem quoted: *Westward Ho,* 116-117.
Milton, John, 21, 42, 60, 72, 141, 172, 177-179, 191, 204, 226, 269, 277-278, 317, 354, 361, 364, 369, 400, 444, 453, 471; poems quoted: *Comus* (in part), 177-178; *Paradise Lost* (in part), 179; *When I Consider,* 270; *On the Late Massacre in Piedmont,* 278.
Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, The, 248.
mockingbird in poetry, the, 132.
Modern Love, 275.
Monadnock through the Trees (Robinson), quoted 463.
monometer, 75, 76.
†*Monroe, Harriet, 16, 406.
*Moody, William Vaughn, 444.
Moore, Thomas, 37-38, 336-337, 481; poems quoted: *Believe Me if All Those Endearing Young Charms,* 38; *The Time I've Lost in Wooing* (in part), 324.
Moral Equivalent of War, The, 471.
Mordaunt, Major Thomas, O., poem quoted: *Sound, Sound the Clarion, Fill the Fife,* 471.
†*Morley, Christopher, 326, 468;

poem quoted: *To a Post-Office Inkwell,* 357.
Morris, William, 52, 110, 217, 411-412, 446; poems quoted: *An Apology,* 215-216; *A Garden by the Sea* (in part), 412.
Mr. Flood's Party (Robinson), quoted 211-213.
Mrs. Judge Jenkins (Harte), quoted 346-348.
music, relation of poetry to, Chapter II *passim;* verbal music, 59-61, 65.
My Last Duchess (Browning), quoted 199-201.
My Maryland (Randall), 48-52, quoted 50-52.
My Mistress's Boots (Locker-Lampson), quoted 330-332.
mythology, 102, 251-252, 270.

Napier, Eliot, 468; poem quoted: *All Men are Free,* 304-305.
nature in poetry, 179, 187, 189, 410-425. See also notes to Chapter XI.
Navies nor Armies (Gilder), quoted 359.
negro songs, 28-29, 238.
New England poets, the, 7, 374, 457-459, 463.
New World, The (Bynner), quoted in part 381.
Newton, Sir Isaac, 349.
nightingale in poetry, the, 132.
Nineteenth Psalm, 367, 377, quoted in part 368.
Niobe (Noyes), quoted 102-103.
No Longer Mourn for Me When I Am Dead (Shakespeare), quoted 273.
nonameter, 75.
nonsense verse, 339-342.
Now They are Gone (Masefield), quoted 288-289.
†Noyes, Alfred, 65, 82, 302, 421, 445, 448, 452-453, 478; poems quoted: *Astrid* (in part), 82; *Niobe,* 102-103; *Unity,* 159; *Seven Wise Men,* 160-161; *The Highwayman,* 262-267; *Art* (in part), 294; *Kilmeny,* 479.

O Captain! my Captain! (Whitman), quoted 402-403.
octameter, 75.
octosyllabic couplet, 125.
ode, the, 226-227.
Ode (O'Shaughnessy), quoted 167-168.
Ode: Intimations of Immortality (Wordsworth), 412, quoted 228-234.
Ode on a Grecian Urn (Keats), quoted 105-106.
Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration (J. R. Lowell), quoted in part 404-405.
Ode to a Nightingale (Keats), 4, 369, quoted in part 59-60.
Ode to Duty (Wordsworth), quoted 96-98.
Ode to Evening (Collins), quoted 365-367.
Ode to the West Wind (Shelley), quoted 223-225.
Odyssey, the, 183, 235, 271.
Oft Have I Seen at Some Cathedral Door (Longfellow), quoted 287.
Oh! Snatch'd Away in Beauty's Bloom (Byron), quoted 395.
Old French Forms, see Chapter VIII *passim,* 294 ff.
On a Magazine Sonnet (Loines), quoted 348.
In a Station of the Metro (Pound), quoted 360.
On Beau Nash's Picture (Mrs. Brereton), quoted 356.
On Death (Landor), quoted 354.
On his Seventy-fifth Birthday (Landor), quoted 354.
On First Looking into Chapman's Homer (Keats), quoted 271.
On Growing Old (Masefield), quoted 290.
On Seeing Weather-beaten Trees (Crapsey), quoted 194.

On the Building of Springfield (Lindsay), quoted 437-439.
On the Countess Dowager of Pembroke (Browne), quoted 349.
On the Grasshopper and Cricket (Keats), 281, quoted 282.
On the Late Massacre in Piedmont (Milton), 277, quoted 288.
On the Tombs in Westminster Abbey (Beaumont), quoted 113.
onomatopœia, 108, 179, 197-198, 218, 219.
†*Oppenheim, James, 406, 468.
Ordeal of Richard Feverel, The, 372, 373.
Origin of Species, The, 417.
O'Shaughnessy, Arthur William Edgar, poem quoted: *Ode,* 167-168.
Ossian, 364.
O Star of Morning and of Liberty (Longfellow), quoted 287.
O Talk Not to Me (Byron), quoted 139-140.
Othello (Shakespeare), quoted in part 175-176, 471.
ottava rima, 214.
Ozymandias (Shelley), 275, 280, 288, quoted 281.

painting, its relation to poetry, 30, 107, 413.
Palabras Cariñosas (Aldrich), quoted 323-324.
Palgrave, Francis Turner, 139, 140, 242.
pantoum, the, 311-313.
Paradise Lost (Milton), quoted in part 179-180.
parody, the, 345-348.
Patterson, W. M., 386.
†*Peabody, Josephine Preston (Mrs. Lionel Marks), 468; poem quoted: *"Vanity, Saith the Preacher,"* 332-333.
Peele Castle, 413-414.
pentameter, 75. See also iambic pentameter.
Percy, Bishop Thomas, 238.
Perry, Bliss, 16, 64.
Petrarch, Francis, 269, 292, 354, 392, 411.
Phillips, Stephen, 446.
Philomela (Arnold), quoted 369-370.
*Pierpont, John, poem quoted: *The Ballot,* 115.
*Pinkney, Edward Coate, poem quoted: *A Health,* 338-339.
Pippa Passes, 148.
Pobble Who Has No Toes, The (Lear), quoted 340-342.
*Poe, Edgar Allan, 2, 6, 8, 11, 17, 60, 75, 128, 204, 210, 226, 364, 389, 426, 457; poems quoted: *To One in Paradise,* 128-129; *The Sleeper,* 389-391; *Sonnet—To Science* (in part), 416.
Poet, The (Bryant), quoted 9-10.
poet laureate, the, 110, 156, 283.
Poetic Origins and the Ballad, 236.
poetry; two kinds of, 2; definitions of, 6 ff.; didactic, 7-8; how to read, 19, 57; methods of studying, 388.
"polyphonic prose," 386.
Pope, Alexander, 12, 75, 192, 196-198, 300, 339, 392, 470; poems quoted: *Essay on Criticism* (in part), 12, 197-198; *Iliad* (in part), 193; *Epitaph Intended for Sir Isaac Newton,* 349; *I Am His Highness' Dog at Kew,* 355.
Poplar Field, The (Cowper), quoted 140-141.
popular ballad, the, 235 ff.
†*Pound, Ezra, 359, 468; poem quoted: *In a Station of the Metro,* 360.
Pound, Professor Louise, 236.
Praed, Winthrop Mackworth, 339, 361.
Prairies, The (Bryant), quoted in part 186-187.

Prayer for India, A (Tagore), quoted 469.
Prayer of the Flowers, The (Dunsany), quoted 442.
Prelude (Gibson), quoted 456.
Prelude, The (Wordsworth), quoted in part, 179-180.
Prior, Matthew, 333, 339; poems quoted: *To a Child of Quality,* 334; *To his Soul,* 352-353; *Written in a Lady's Milton,* 355.
Private of the Buffs, The (Doyle), quoted 94-96.
Prodigals, The (Dobson), quoted 299.
Prometheus Unbound, 141.
prose, its relation to poetry, 10, 193, 363-364, 373-374, 386-387, 445.
prose poetry, 364, 373-374.
Prospice (Browning), quoted 146-147.
Psalm, the Nineteenth, 367, 377, quoted in part 368.
Psalm of Life, A, 7, 12.
puns, 342.
Purple Cow, The (Burgess), quoted 340.

Questioning Lydia (Untermeyer from Horace), quoted 327-328.

*Randall, James Ryder, 48 ff.; poem quoted: *My Maryland,* 50-52.
Recessional (Kipling), quoted 472-473.
refrain, the, 161, 259.
Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, 238.
Renaissance, the Italian, 199, 269.
Requiem (Stevenson), quoted 53.
Requiescat (Arnold), quoted 395-396.
Reveille (Housman), quoted in part 73-74.
Reynard the Fox, 454.
Rhymes to be Traded for Bread, 464.
Rhythm of Prose, The, 386.
†*Rice, Cale Young, 468.
†*Ridge, Lola, 468.
Right Royal, 454.
rime, kinds of, 81-82, 108; eye-rime, 58, 98; functions of, 190-193.
rime royal stanza, the, 215 ff.
riming dictionary, 18.
Ring Out, Wild Bells (Tennyson), quoted 108-109.
Rizpah, 447.
Robin Hood, 252.
†*Robinson, Edwin Arlington, 11 (his definition of poetry), 188, 211, 288, 290, 291, 292, 294, 380, 405, 421, 444, 445, 447, 462, 463; poems quoted: *Ben Jonson Entertains a Man from Stratford* (in part), 188-189; *Mr. Flood's Party,* 211-213; *Firelight,* 290-291; *Souvenir,* 291; *An Inscription by the Sea,* 350; *The Master,* 406-408; *The Dark Hills,* 462-463; *Monadnock through the Trees,* 463.
Rochester, Earl of, poem quoted: *Epitaph on Charles II,* 350.
Rogers, Samuel, 481.
Romance (Henley), quoted 121-122.
rondeau, the, 303 ff.
Rondeau (Hunt), quoted 357.
Rose Aylmer (Landor), quoted 394.
Rossetti, Christina Georgina, 123, 359; poem quoted: *Song,* 123-124.
Rossetti, Dante Gabriel, 104, 107, 252, 282, 392, 446; poems quoted: *A Sonnet is a Moment's Monument,* 268; The *Ballad of Dead Ladies* (from Villon), 300-301.
Rossini, 58.
roundel, the, 308.
Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, The

(Fitzgerald), quoted in part 213, 289.
Ruskin, John, 11.

Salt Water Poems and Ballads, 254, 453.
Samson Agonistes, 141.
†*Sandburg, Carl, 364, 380, 381, 406, 433, 463, 467-468, 477; poems quoted: *A Fence,* 384-385; *Chicago,* 433-435; *A. E. F.,* 480.
San Francisco (Harte), quoted in part 427.
sapphic stanza, the, 368-369.
Sappho, 359, 368.
†Sassoon, Siegfried, 475, 477-478; poem quoted: *Song-books of the War,* 478.
*Saxe, John Godfrey, 339; poem quoted: *Woman's Will,* 356.
scansion, 65 ff.
Schubert, Franz, 36.
science, its relation to poetry, 10-11, 416-418, 435.
†*Scollard, Clinton, 302, 406; poem quoted: *In the Sultan's Garden,* 312-313.
Scott, Lady John, poem quoted: *Annie Laurie,* 34-35.
Scott, Sir Walter, 147, 152, 246-251, 252, 365, 391, 411, 471; poems quoted: *Hunting Song,* 72-73; *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (in part), 125-126; *Coronach,* 148; *Lochinvar,* 248-250.
Scottish dialect, the, 32.
Second April, 398.
*Seeger, Alan, 474-475; poem quoted: *I Have a Rendezvous with Death,* 474-475.
†Service, Robert W., 448.
sestina, the, 313-315.
Sestina to F. H. (Gosse), quoted 314-315.
Seven Wise Men (Noyes), quoted 160-161.
Shakespeare, William, 27, 36 (his songs), 60, 127, 172, 175-177, 196, 215, 269, 272-274, 391, 470, 471; poems quoted: *Hark! Hark! the Lark,* 36-37; *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (in part), 174-175; *Hamlet* (in part), 175; *Othello* (in part), 175-176, 471; *Shall I Compare Thee to a Summer's Day,* 272-273; *No Longer Mourn for Me When I am Dead,* 273; *To Me, Fair Friend, You Never Can Be Old,* 274.
Shakespeare (Arnold), 275, 285, quoted 285-286.
Shall I Compare Thee to a Summer's Day? (Shakespeare), quoted 272-273.
She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways (Wordsworth), quoted 393-394.
Shelley, Harry Rowe, 472.
Shelley, Percy Bysshe, 11 (his definition of poetry), 60, 141, 275, 280, 288, 364, 369, 400, 411; poems quoted: *To Night,* 61-62; *To a Skylark,* 132-136; *The Cloud,* 149-152; *Ode to the West Wind,* 223-225; *Ozymandias,* 281.
†*Shepard, Odell, poem quoted: *Certain American Poets,* 458.
*Sherman, Frank Dempster, 294, 306, 406.
She Walks in Beauty (Byron), 75, quoted 70-71.
short poems, 348 ff.
Sidney, Sir Philip, 2, 237, 269, 276, 349, 363, 364, 400; poem quoted: *Come, Sleep! O Sleep,* 276-277.
*Sill, Edward Rowland, 405, 406.
Since There's No Help (Drayton), quoted 277.
Sinclair, Upton, 20.
Sir John Franklin (Tennyson), quoted 349-350.
Sir Patrick Spens, 240, 252, quoted 241-242.
Skipper Ireson's Ride (Whittier), quoted 259-262.

Sleep and Poetry (Keats), quoted in part 198-199.
Smith, C. Alphonso, 128.
Sleeper, The (Poe), quoted 389-391.
*Smith, Rev. Samuel Francis, 43, poem quoted: *America,* 44-45.
Snow-Bound (Whittier), 396, quoted in part 125.
Snow-Storm, The (Emerson), quoted 187-188.
Soldier, The (Brooke), quoted 284-285.
Solitary Reaper, The (Wordsworth), quoted 84-85.
Some Imagist Poems, 460.
song; defined, 21; love songs, 34; college songs, 38-39; hymns, 40-41; patriotic songs, 41 ff.; songs no longer sung, 55 ff.
Song (Christina Rossetti), quoted 123-124.
Song to Celia (Jonson), quoted 37.
Song-books of the War (Sassoon), quoted 478.
Songs of Innocence: Introduction (Blake), quoted 74.
sonnet, the, 348, Chapter VII *passim,* 268 ff.; Italian, 269 ff.; Shakespearean, 272 ff.; Spenserian, 274-275; sonnets on the sonnet, 268, 292-293.
Sonnet is a Moment's Monument, A (Rossetti), quoted 268.
Sonnets from the Portuguese, 282-283.
Sonnet's Voice, The (Watts-Dunton), quoted 293.
Sound, Sound the Clarion, Fill the Fife (Mordaunt), quoted 471.
Southey, Robert, 369.
Souvenir (Robinson), quoted 291.
Spenser, Edmund, 60, 217, 269, 274, 400, 453; poems quoted: *The Faërie Queene* (in part), 218-219; *What Guile is This,* 275.
Spenserian sonnet, the, 274-275.
Spenserian stanza, 217 ff.
Spingarn, Joel Elias, 8, 363, 388.
Splendor Falls, The (Tennyson), quoted 107-108.
Spoon River Anthology (Masters), 373, 382, quoted in part 372, 465-467.
stanza, 76, 77, 194.
Star-Spangled Banner, The (Key), 42, 67, quoted 42-43.
*Stedman, Edmund Clarence, 321, 323, 339, 444, 457.
Stevenson, Robert Louis, 90, poem quoted: *Requiem,* 53.
*Stoddard, Richard Henry, 405.
Study of Poetry, A, 16, 64.
Surrey, Earl of, 173, 269.
Sweet and Low (Tennyson), quoted 63.
Swift, Jonathan, 339.
Swinburne, Algernon Charles, 75, 77, 104, 110, 141, 400, 401, 411, 446, 447, 464; poems quoted: *The Garden of Proserpine,* 78-80; *A Forsaken Garden,* 142-144; *A Baby's Feet,* 308; *To Walt Whitman in America* (in part), 375.
Swing Low, Sweet Chariot, quoted 28-29.
Symonds, John Addington, 60.
Synge, John Millington, 468.

†Tagore, Rabindranath, 374, 469; poem quoted: *A Prayer for India,* 469.
*Taylor, Bert Leston, 326.
†*Teasdale, Sara (Mrs. Filsinger), 123, 124, 368, 468; poems quoted: *I Shall Not Care,* 124; *Wisdom,* 124; *The Lamp,* 368-369.
Telling the Bees (Whittier), quoted 396-398.
Tennyson, Alfred, 13, 60, 108-113, 140, 147, 152, 192, 197,

252, 283, 364, 365, 372, 392, 400, 411, 412, 425, 446-447, 452, 453; poems quoted: *Crossing the Bar,* 62-63; *Sweet and Low,* 63; *The Splendor Falls,* 107-108; *Ring Out, Wild Bells,* 108-109; *To the Queen,* 110-111; *To Virgil,* 113-115; *Break, Break, Break,* 168-169; *Ulysses,* 183-185; *Sir John Franklin,* 349-350; *Flower in the Crannied Wall,* 412; *In Memoriam* (in part), 108-109, 417-418.
Tennyson (van Dyke), quoted 112.
terza rima, 222 ff.
tetrameter, 75.
Texas (Amy Lowell), quoted 440-441.
Thackeray, William Makepeace, 339.
Thanatopsis (Bryant), quoted in part 90.
Theocritus, 295.
This Quiet Dust (Dickinson), quoted 353.
*Thompson, Maurice, 400, 401.
Thomson, James, 219, 411.
Thoreau, Henry David, 375.
Thorndike, Ashley Horace, 446.
Tiger, The (Blake), quoted in part 72.
time element in English verse, the, 67.
Time I've Lost in Wooing, The (Moore), quoted in part 324.
*Timrod, Henry; poem quoted: *At Magnolia Cemetery,* 121-122.
Tinker, Chauncey B., 352.
Tintern Abbey (Wordsworth), 412, quoted in part 413.
To a Certain Civilian (Whitman), quoted 376.
To a Child of Quality Five Years Old (Prior), quoted 334.
To a Locomotive in Winter (Whitman), quoted 436-437.
To a Post-Office Inkwell (Morley), quoted 357.
To a Skylark (Shelley), 22, quoted 132-136.
To a Water-fowl (Bryant), quoted 88-89.
To Christina Rossetti (Watson), quoted 359.
To his Soul (Prior from Hadrian), quoted 352-353.
To Lucasta, on Going to the Wars (Lovelace), quoted 98-99.
To Me, Fair Friend, You Never Can Be Old (Shakespeare), quoted 274.
To Night (Shelley), 61, 127, quoted 61-62.
To Old Age (Whitman), quoted 359.
To One in Paradise (Poe), quoted 128-129.
To Robert Browning (Landor), quoted 182.
To Rosemounde. A Balade (Chaucer), quoted 303.
To the Queen (Tennyson), quoted 110-111.
To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time (Herrick), 324, quoted 325.
To Thomas Moore (Byron), quoted 337.
To Those Who Died (J. R. Lowell), quoted 358.
To Virgil (Tennyson), 172, quoted 113-115.
To Walt Whitman in America (Swinburne), quoted in part 375.
toast, the, 336-339.
tone-color, 83. See also onomatopœia.
translators, 192-193, 286-287.
Trees (Kilmer), quoted 422.
Triad (Crapsey), quoted 360.
trimeter, 75.
triolet, the, 308-309.
triple meters, the, 69; see Chapter IV *passim,* 137 ff.
trochaic verse, 68, 72.
Truth about Horace, The (Field), quoted 326-327.

Tuft of Flowers, The (Frost), quoted 201-203.
Twa Corbies, The, 239, quoted 240.

Ulysses (Tennyson), quoted 183-185.
∪nity (Noyes), quoted 159.
Unmanifest Destiny (Hovey), quoted 117-118.
†*Untermeyer, Louis, 294, 306, 307, 457, 464, 468; poem quoted: *Questioning Lydia*, 327-328.
Up at a Villa—Down in the City (Browning), quoted 429-432.
Upon his Departure Hence (Herrick), quoted 76.

†*Van Dyke, Henry; poem quoted: *Tennyson*, 112.
Vanity Fair, 144.
"Vanity, Saith the Preacher" (Peabody), quoted 332-333.
Vergil, 67, 172, 173, 368.
vers de société, 306, 318 ff.
verse-writing, 17 ff.
Victorian poets, the; 2, 13; contemporary aversion to, 446-447, 450.
villanelle, the, 309-311.
Villanelle (Henley), quoted 311.
Villon, François, 300, 302; poem quoted: *The Ballad of Dead Ladies*, 300-301.
Vision of Judgment, The (Byron), 373, quoted in part 214-215.
Vitas Hinnuleo (Dobson), quoted 307-308.

Wagner, Richard, 23.
Waller, Edmund; poem quoted: *Go, Lovely Rose*, 87-88.
Wanderer, The (Dobson), quoted 306-307.
Wanderer's Night-songs (Longfellow from Goethe), quoted 353-354.
war and poetry, 470 ff.
War with Germany, poetry of, 469 ff.
Warning, The (Crapsey), quoted 360.
†Watson, Sir William, 110, 157, 285, 400, 445; poems quoted: *Lachrimæ Musarum* (in part), 1; *Written in Mr. Sidney Lee's Life of Shakespeare*, 286; *His Friends He Loved*, 355; *To Christina Rossetti*, 359; *For Metaphors of Man*, 410; *England, my Mother* (in part), 443.
Watterson, Henry, 401.
†*Wattles, Willard; poem quoted: *Creeds*, 356.
Watts-Dunton, Theodore, 11 (his definition of poetry), 137, 226-227; poem quoted: *The Sonnet's Voice*, 293.
Wells, Carolyn, 321.
West, in poetry, the, 116-117, 186-187, 439.
West Wind, The (Masefield), quoted 170-171.
West Wind, Ode to the (Shelley), quoted 223-225.
Westminster Abbey, 112-113.
Westward Ho (Miller), 115, quoted 116-117.
What Guile is This (Spenser), quoted 275.
When I Consider (Milton), 270, 271, quoted 270.
†*Wheelock, John Hall, 422, 468; poem quoted: *Earth*, 423-425.
When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer (Whitman), quoted 377.
When I Saw You Last, Rose (Dobson), quoted 310-311.
When Lovely Woman Stoops to Folly (Goldsmith), quoted 101.
When Lovely Woman Wants a Favor (Cary), quoted 345-346.
When You Are Old (Yeats), quoted 451-452.
Whistler, James McNeil, 5.
White, Gleeson, 295.

White Man's Burden, The (Kipling), quoted 92-94.
Whitefield, George, 104.
Whitlock, Brand, 401.
*WHITMAN, WALT, 12, 363, 364, 365, 369, 370, 371, 372, 374-379, 380, 381, 400, 432, 457; poems quoted: *To Old Age,* 359; *To a Certain Civilian,* 376; *When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer,* 377; *As Toilsome I Wander'd Virginia's Woods,* 378; *Darest Thou Now, O Soul,* 379; *O Captain! my Captain!* 402-403; *To a Locomotive in Winter,* 436-437.
*WHITTIER, JOHN GREENLEAF, 5, 110, 125, 157, 346, 405, 457, 459; poems quoted: *Burns* (in part), 5; *Snow-Bound* (Whittier), quoted in part 125; *Skipper Ireson's Ride,* 259-262; *Telling the Bees,* 396-398.
Who Builds a Ship (Bridges), quoted 284.
Widow in the Bye Street, The (Masefield), 453, 454, quoted in part 217.
Wilde, Richard Henry, 87.
William Tell, 58.
Winchilsea, Lady, 411.
Wisdom (Teasdale), quoted 124.
With Petrarch's Sonnets (Landor), quoted 354.
WOLFE, CHARLES, 144; poem quoted: *The Burial of Sir John Moore,* 145-146.
Woman's Will (Saxe), quoted 356.
†*Woodberry, George Edward, 20.
WORDSWORTH, WILLIAM, 1, 3, 7, 11, 42, 83, 85, 87, 132, 144, 156, 179, 215, 226, 227, 252, 278-279, 283, 317, 363, 411, 412-416, 427-428, 435, 461, 481; poems quoted: *The Solitary Reaper,* 84-85; *I Wandered Lonely,* 86; *Ode to Duty,* 96-98; *The Prelude* (in part), 179-180; *Ode: Intimations of Immortality,* 228-234; *London, 1802,* 278-279; *The World Is Too Much With Us,* 279; *She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways,* 393-394; *Tintern Abbey* (in part), 413; *Elegiac Stanzas,* 414-416; *Composed upon Westminster Bridge,* 428.
World Is Too Much With Us, The (Wordsworth), 278, 427, quoted 279.
Worm and the Angel, The (Dunsany), quoted 373-374.
Wren, Sir Christopher, 160.
Wright-Davis, Mary, 406.
Written in a Lady's Milton (Prior), quoted 355.
Written in Mr. Sidney Lee's Life of Shakespeare, 285, quoted 286.
Wyatt, Sir Thomas, 269.

Yarn of the "Loch Achray," The (Masefield), 252, quoted 254-256.
Year's at the Spring, The (Browning), quoted 149.
†YEATS, WILLIAM BUTLER, 57, 60, 63-64, 188, 252, 446, 450-452; poems quoted: *Song from The Land of Heart's Desire,* 64; *The Lake Isle of Innisfree,* 169-170; *When You are Old and Gray,* 451-452.
Young and Old (Kingsley), quoted 100-101.
Young Lady of Niger, The, quoted 345.

INDEX TO FIRST LINES

	PAGE
A baby's feet, like sea-shells pink	308
A blend of mirth and sadness, smiles and tears	401
A dainty thing's the Villanelle	311
A flying word from here and there	406
A late lark twitters from the quiet skies	380
A pitcher of mignonette	309
A pleasing land of drowsy-head it was	219
A schism Nurtured by foppery and barbarism	198
A Sonnet is a moment's monument	268
A vanished house that for an hour I knew	291
A weapon that comes down as still	115
Ah! leave the smoke, the wealth, the roar	295
Ah, what avails the sceptred race	394
Alas for him who never sees	125
All men are free and equal born	304
And in the frosty season, when the sun	179
Announced by all the trumpets of the sky	187
As he crawled from the tombs of the fallen	373
As I was walking all alane	240
As one, at midnight, wakened by the call	456
As o'er the cold sepulchral stone	357
As to democracy, fellow citizens	467
As toilsome I wander'd Virginia's woods	378
At midnight, in the month of June	389
Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones	278
Because you passed, and now are not	297
Before there was in Egypt any sound	463
Behold her, single in the field	84
Behold what homage to his idol paid	354
Believe me, if all those endearing young charms	38
Ben Battle was a soldier bold	342
Be with me, Beauty, for the fire is dying	290
Blake saw	15
Break, break, break	168
Breathes there the man, with soul so dead	125
Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul	90
By the rude bridge that arched the flood	56
Come, fill the Cup and in the fire of Spring	213

PAGE

Come, Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace 276
Come! United States of America 382
Cromwell, I did not think to shed a tear 176

Darest thou now, O Soul 379
Dark, dark lay the drifters against the red West 479
Dark hills at evening in the west 462
Death stands above me, whispering low 354
Deep in the shady sadness of a vale 181
Did you ask dulcet rhymes from me 376
Down Bye Street, in a little Shropshire town 217
Drink to me only with thine eyes 37

Earth has not anything to show more fair 428
Eternal Spirit of the chainless Mind 280

Fair Harvard! thy sons to thy jubilee throng 39
Fair islands of the silver fleece 296
Farewell, Romance! the Cave-men said 449
Fear death?—to feel the fog in my throat 146
Flower in the crannied wall 412
Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes 31
For all we have and are 118
For metaphors of man we search the skies 410
From the misty shores of midnight 112

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may 325
Give me of your bark, O Birch-tree 71
Go, lovely Rose 87
God of our fathers, known of old 472
God save our gracious King. 45
Good-night! I have to say good-night 323
Grasshopper, your fairy song 423

Had I plenty of money, money enough and to spare . . . 429
Hail to thee, blithe Spirit 132
Hark! ah, the nightingale 369
Hark! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings 36
He above the rest 179
He is gone on the mountain 148
He, making speedy way through 'spersèd air 218
Heart of my heart, the world is young 159
Here is the place; right over the hill 396
Here lies Johnny Pidgeon 351
Here lies our Sovereign Lord the King 350
Here, where the world is quiet 78
His friends he loved. His direst earthly foes 355

PAGE
Hog-Butcher for the World 433
How do I love thee? Let me count the ways 283
How like the sky she bends above her child 102
How many humble hearts have dipped 357
How pitiful are little folk 356

I am His Highness' dog at Kew 355
I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers 149
I fill this cup to one made up 338
I have a rendezvous with Death 474
I have learned to look on nature 413
I have studied many times 466
I heard the trailing garments of the Night 127
I know a little garden-close 412
I love my little gowns 332
I met a traveller from an antique land 281
I never saw a Purple Cow 340
I never see the red rose crown the year 289
I pray you, in your letters 175
I saw him once before 328
I see in you the estuary that enlarges 359
I strove with none, for none was worth my strife 354
I think that I shall never see 422
I take no shame that still I sing the Rose 459
I wandered lonely as a cloud 86
I was thy neighbour once, thou rugged pile 414
I went a-riding, a-riding 440
I went to turn the grass once after one 201
I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree 169
I wish I were where Helen lies 243
I would be the Lyric 317
If aught of oaten stop or pastoral song 365
If I can bear your love like a lamp before me 368
If I should die, think only this of me 284
I'm sitting alone by the fire 318
Immortal Newton never spoke 356
In a coign of the cliff between lowland and highland . . . 142
In after days when grasses high 305
In fair Provence, the land of lute and rose 314
In fifty years, when peace outshines 478
In Flanders fields the poppies blow 304
In our hearts is the Great One of Avon 361
In the first year of freedom's second dawn 214
In Xanadu did Kubla Khan 130
In youth my wings were strong and tireless 373
Is it as plainly in our living shown 194
Is there a whim-inspirèd fool 99
It is portentous, and a thing of state 409

PAGE

It is too late now to retrieve 475
It is very aggravating 326
It little profits that an idle king 183
It was an old, old, old, old lady 335
It was the voice of the flowers on the West Wind 442
It's a warm wind, the west wind, full of birds' cries 170

Jenny kissed me when we met 357
Jesse James was a lad that killed a-many a man 244
John Anderson my jo, John 55
John Brown's body lies a-mould'ring in the grave 46
Just for a handful of silver he left us 157
Just now 360

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle 165

Last night, among his fellow roughs 94
Lead, kindly light, amid th' encircling gloom 41
Lee, who in niggard soil hast delved, to find 286
Let not our town be large—remembering 437
Let them bury your big eyes 398
Life is a jest, and all things show it 350
Lo with the ancient 443
Lords, knights, and 'squires, the numerous band 334
Love comes back to his vacant dwelling 306
Lydia, why do you ruin by lavishing 327

Madame, ye ben of al beautè shryne 303
Maud Muller all that summer day 346
Maxwelton braes are bonnie 34
Men, dying, make their wills; but wives 356
Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour 278
Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord . . 48
Mortality, behold and fear 113
My boat is on the shore 337
My country, 'tis of thee 44
Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold 271

Nature and Nature's laws lay hid in night 349
Navies nor armies can exalt the state 359
No dust have I to cover me 350
No longer mourn for me when I am dead 273
Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note 145
Not here! the white North has thy bones; and thou 349
Not of the princes and prelates 455
Now the stone house on the lake front is finished 384
Now they are gone with all their songs and sins 288

PAGE

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done 402
O star of morning and of liberty 287
O talk not to me of a name great in story 139
O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms 257
O where ha'e ye been, Lord Randal, my son? 239
O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being 223
O'er all the hill-tops 353
Of all the rides since the birth of time 259
Of Heaven or Hell I have no power to sing 215
Oft have I seen at some cathedral door 287
Oh Rome! my country! City of the soul 426
Oh, say, can you see, by the dawn's early light 42
Oh, slow to smite and swift to spare 403
Oh! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom 395
Oh! young Lochinvar is come out of the west 248
Old Eben Flood, climbing alone one night 211
One more Unfortunate 153
Others abide our question. Thou are free 285
Out of the hills of Habersham 164
Out of the night that covers me 91

Pale beech and pine so blue 420
Piping down the valleys wild 74
Poor little, pretty, fluttering thing 352
Princes!—and you, most valorous 299

Queen and Huntress, chaste and fair 71

Revered, beloved—O you that hold 110
Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky 108
Roman Virgil, thou that singest 113
Rood is my name. Once long ago 352
Rose kissed me to-day 309

Scorn not the Sonnet; Critic, you have frowned 292
"Scorn not the sonnet," though its strength be sapped . . . 348
Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled 120
Send but a song oversea for us 375
Seven wise men on an old black settle 160
Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? 272
She dwelt among the untrodden ways 393
She oped the portal of the palace 312
She that has that is clad in complete steel 177
She walks in beauty, like the night 70
Should auld acquaintance be forgot 33
Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part 277
Sleep softly . . . eagle forgotten . . . under the stone . . . 464
Sleep sweetly in your humble graves 122

	PAGE
"So careful of the type?" but no	417
So live, that when thy summons comes to join	90
Somebody called Walt Whitman Dead!	381
Something there is that doesn't love a wall	189
Songstress, in all times ended and begun	359
Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife	471
St. Agnes' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was	220
Stern Daughter of the Voice of God	96
Strew on her roses, roses	395
Such was he, our Martyr-chief	404
Sunset and evening star	62
Sweet and low, sweet and low	63
Swiftly walk o'er the western wave	61
Swing low, sweet chariot	28
Take up the White Man's burden	92
"Talk of pluck!" pursued the Sailor	121
Tell me not, Sweet, I am unkind	98
Tell me now in what hidden way is	300
Ten years together without yet a cloud	290
That's my last Duchess painted on the wall	199
The apparition of these faces in the crowd	360
The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold	138
The curfew tolls the knell of parting day	205
The despot's heel is on thy shore	50
The heavens declare the glory of God	368
The "Loch Achray" was a clipper tall	254
The lunatic, the lover, and the poet	174
The king sits in Dumferling town	241
The Pobble who has no toes	340
The poetry of earth is never dead	282
The poplars are felled; farewell to the shade	140
The seasons change, the winds they shift and veer	1
The sea is calm to-night	418
The splendor falls on castle walls	107
The time I've lost in wooing	324
The white moth to the closing bine	53
The wind blows out of the gates of day	64
The wind was a torrent of darkness	262
The world is too much with us; late and soon	279
The year's at the spring	149
Thee for my recitative	436
There is a pleasure in the pathless woods	221
There is delight in singing, tho' none hear	182
There is no frigate like a book	4
There lived a lass in yonder dale	246
There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream	228
There was a young lady of Niger	345

PAGE

There will be a rusty gun on the wall, sweetheart 480
These are the gardens of the Desert, these 186
These be 360
They cowered inert before the study fire 458
They nearly strike me dumb 330
They say that dead men tell no tales 126
This is like the nave of an unfinished cathedral 432
This is the forest primeval 162
This quiet Dust was Gentlemen and Ladies 353
This picture placed these busts between 356
This shining moment is an edifice 172
Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness 105
Thou that from the heavens art 353
Thou wast that all to me, love 128
Thou who wouldst wear the name 9
Though old the thought and oft exprest 358
Three poets, in three distant ages born 197
Thus I 76
Thus would I have it 385
Tiger, tiger, burning bright 72
'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence 197
To me, fair friend, you never can be old 274
To my true king I offered free from stain 351
To those who died for her on land and sea 358
To what new fates, my country 117
Trochee trips from long to short 65

Under the wide and starry sky 53
Underneath this sable hearse 349
Up, lad, up, 'tis late for lying 73
Upon a poet's page I wrote 355

Waken, lords and ladies gay 72
Was this the face that launched a thousand ships 173
Way down upon de Swanee Ribber 23
We are the music-makers 167
Whan that Aprillè with his shourès sootè 195
"What are the bugles blowin' for?" 252
What guile is this, that those her golden tresses 275
What strength! what strife! what rude unrest 116
When all the world is young, lad 100
When I am dead and over me bright April 124
When I am dead, my dearest 123
When I consider how my light is spent 270
When I have ceased to break my wings 124
When I heard the learn'd astronomer 377
When I saw you last, Rose 310
When lovely woman stoops to folly 101

PAGE
When lovely woman wants a favor 345
When you are old and gray and full of sleep 451
Where is the grave of Sir Arthur O'Kellyn? 166
Where the mind is without fear 469
Whirl up, sea— 461
White-armed Astrid,—ah, but she was beautiful 82
Whither, midst falling dew 88
Who builds a ship must first lay down the keel 284
Why each is striving, from of old 92
With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children . . . 476

Ye banks, and braes, and streams around 392
Yon silvery billows breaking on the beach 293
You are a friend then, as I make it out 188
You shun me, Chloe, wild and shy 307